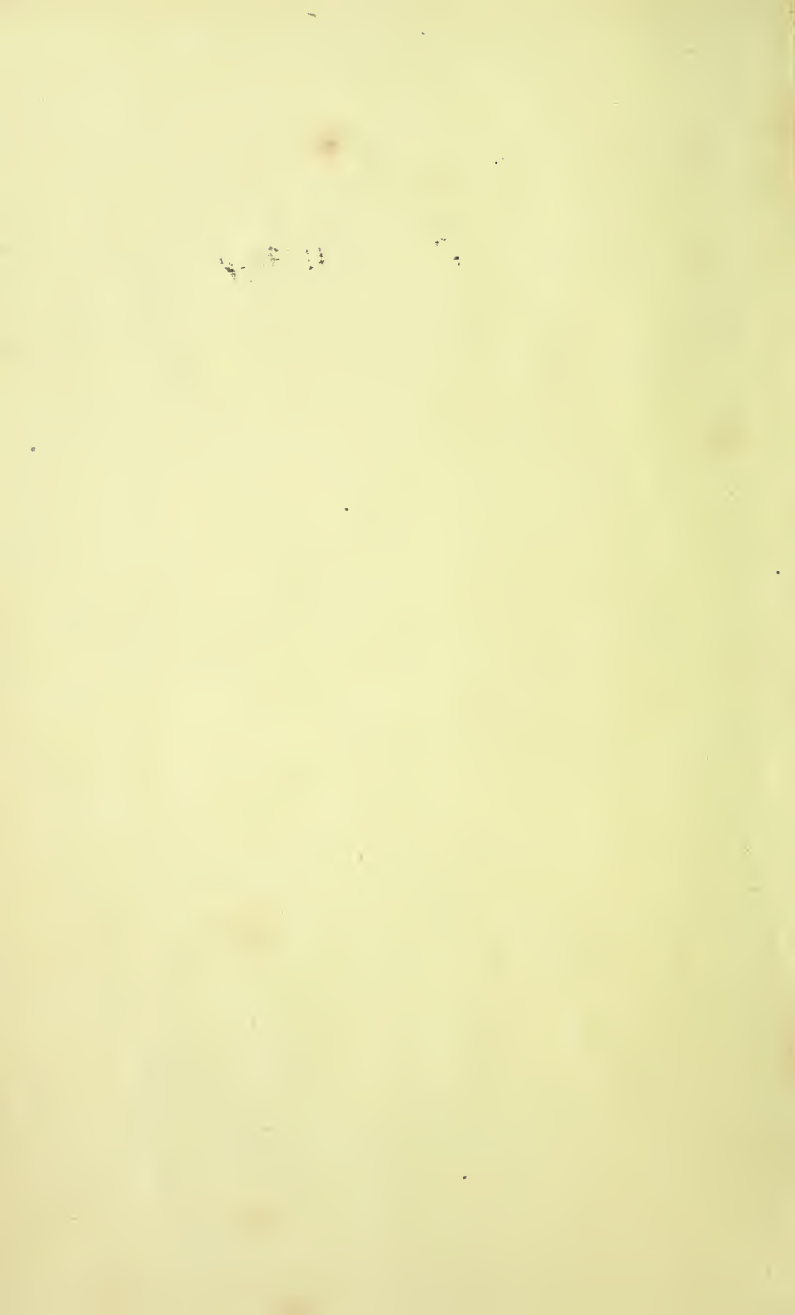






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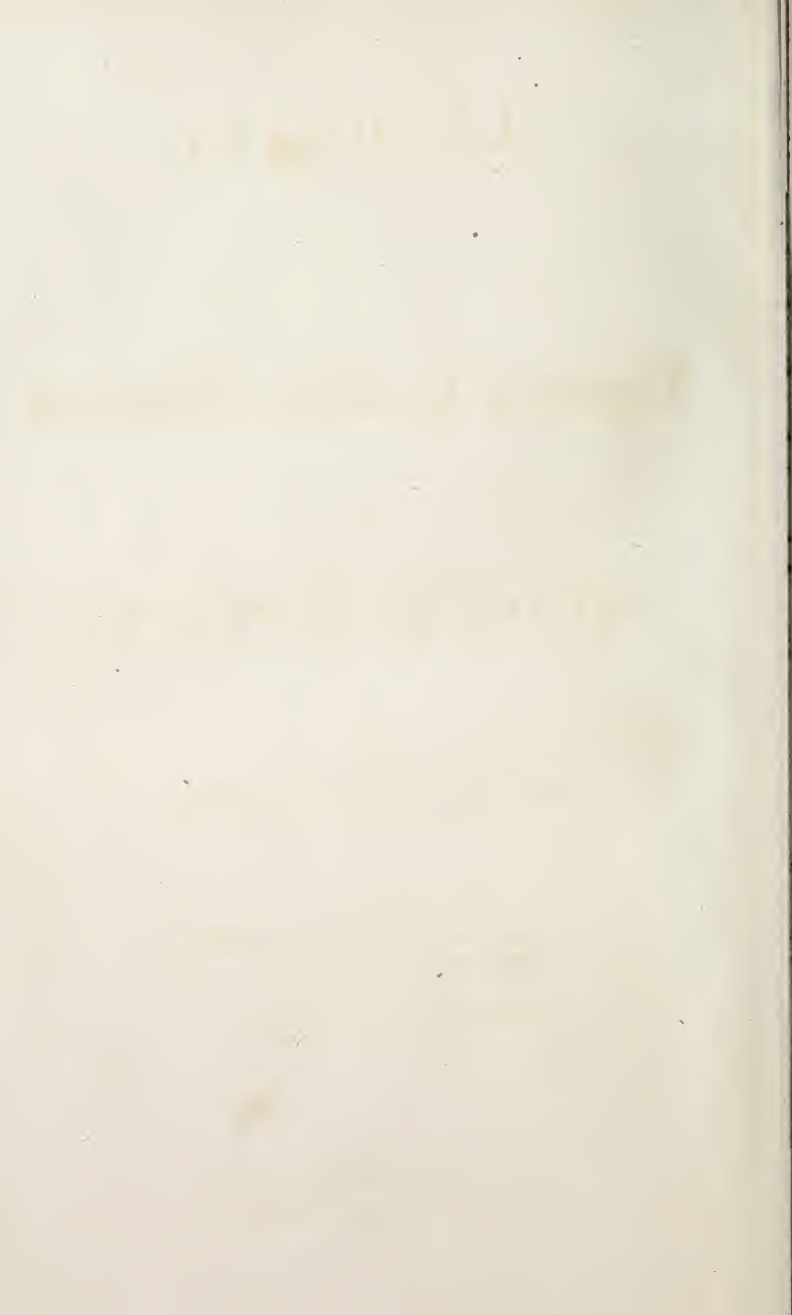
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LACONIA;

OR,

Legends of the White Mountains

AND

MERRY MEETING BAY.

BY

AN OLD MOUNTAINEER.

"These mountains, forests, lakes, and plains
Have echoed oft my cantie strains ;
But now what else for me remains
But tales of woe?
The streamlets frae thy crimson stains
Maun onward flow."

BOSTON:
ASHEL A. KELLEY.
1855.

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TO

THE OLD GRANITE STATE

This humble Work

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

ONE OF HER LOYAL SONS.

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P R E F A C E .

THE principal scenes in the following legends are based for the most part on authenticated historical facts. The chief aim of the author has been to exhibit Nature in her wildest and most startling developments as well as in her tamer and more civilized features. All nations, whether civilized or savage, have some choice spirits who excel their fellows in natural and intrinsic worth and goodness, as well as others of a character diametrically the opposite. Yet, as a whole, every nation seems to exhibit the same general traits of oppression, cruelty, and injustice, especially when holding another and a feebler race under its despotic sway.

The treatment of the red man by the first settlers of our own country forms no exception to this general rule; and in this case the difficulties which arose between them were aggravated by the wide and marked contrast between the contending races. While the white man is most attached to the living, the red man cherishes with the deepest affection the memory of the departed dead; and while the former prizes more highly the costly houses

and cultivated fields of civilization, the latter loves the rude wigwam, the lands unbroken by the plough, and the wild forests as yet unspoiled by the woodman's axe.

To show how unjustly he has been cheated of his possessions and driven from the graves of his fathers, to which he was attached by a feeling the depth and intensity of which the white man has little conception, how he strove to avenge his wrongs by taking the lives of his oppressors, has been one of the ends which the author has had in view while writing the following pages. He does not claim to have succeeded in his undertaking to any extraordinary degree; but the world is welcome to the work, such as it is, until it can get a better, when, as Marine Lee would say, "The little craft may be taken into dock for repairs, or sent adrift as unseaworthy."

I. W. S.

LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS, July, 1854.

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LEGENDS OF LACONIA.

CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF LACONIA. — MAY DAY AT MERRY MEETING BAY. — ELSIE TUFTON IS CHOSEN MAY QUEEN. — APPEARANCE OF ROZELLA LANGDELL AND HER FATHER. — ELSIE ABDICATES IN FAVOR OF ROZELLA. — JACK TAURUS RESOLVES TO WIN THE HAND OF ROZELLA. — HE ENCOUNTERS A RIVAL IN BRITTON WALDRON.

LACONIA, the original appellation of New Hampshire, of which we now purpose to speak, lies in an inclined slope from the seaboard on the east to where the Great Spirit smiles in combined loveliness and grandeur upon the glittering surface of the Winnipiseogee on the west.

To the north she stretches away through the brave old woods and forests until her head is lost in the clouds upon the summits of the White Mountains, which stand like monstrous haystacks tumbled together, and still stretching upward and onward until their bald heads are capped and concealed by encircling mists. But when the air is clear and the sun has dispersed the overhanging vapors, they stand out in all their awful majesty, and seem the very pillars of heaven.

Still the romantic Laconia sighs restlessly with the burden of her secret mysteries, her untold legends, and her heroic deeds of valor, which have been long buried deep within her silent bosom ; so that, heretofore, neither the

ocean that breaks at her feet nor the thunders that burst in her ears have caused her to divulge her locked-up secrets.

But as the sun strikes his rays upon the frosty locks of winter, and turns its frozen bolts until the cemented earth yields, and the roots of plant and tree send forth their offerings in shooting stalks, and buds, and blossoms, so the rays of the spirit of inquisitiveness have dissolved the icy mantle upon the hidden bosom of Laconia, and she offers to our gaze her most secret mysteries. Her rural page is now thrown open for the recording pen to inscribe her chivalrous deeds and marvellous history.

In the early settlement of this portion of New Hampshire, if one locality might have been selected above another for its picturesque beauty, that district lying between a small bay of Winnipiseogee Lake and a pond some miles distant, and a lively, bounding river which connected the two last, would have received the preference. These three portions of the same brilliant waters had received the happy appellation of "Merry Meeting."

Some years previous to the time of which we write this section of country had been holden under a grant from King James, through his appointed council of forty noblemen, knights, and gentlemen, by Sir Ferdinand Gorges and Captain John Mason. Mason obtained of Gorges full possession of the lands, and at his death gave the same, by will, to his grandson, Robert Tufton, on condition that he took upon himself the surname of Mason. Tufton, having complied with the condition of the bequest, had his title disputed by the stern yeomanry who had taken up the land and were living upon and improving the same. But after years of dispute and numerous harassing lawsuits, a company, formed for that purpose, purchased, for a nominal sum, Mason's title, and gave out deeds to the first settlers.

In addition to this, the Masonian proprietors sent out a

committee of their body, who visited the land for the purpose of exploration, and at the pond before named became so exhilarated at the scenery and prospect, and enjoyed themselves so highly, as to christen it "Merry Meeting ;" which name it retains to the present day.

But a more merry meeting than that held by the Masonian proprietors was assembled upon the same enchanting spot at a subsequent day. The river, or outlet of the pond, runs from its shore so as to form a right angle with its white, sandy beach. In that angle, Nature, as though she was proud of her artistic skill in laying out secluded parks and grounds, had wisely reserved, and the woodman's axe as prudently spared, one of the most picturesque groves in all the fairyland of Laconia.

This spot, by reason of its appropriate name and desirable location, was selected by the older settlers, the previous autumn, for a meeting, in the spring, of the younger members of the community, to revive, for the first time in all Laconia, the long-missed and mourned holiday they had so dearly cherished in Old England. Therefore, for months previous, May day had been the theme and topic of discourse for young and old. Such as were lovers had long been planning in what way to best advance the interest each of his own particular favorite, that he might be successful in his scheme of cupidity, and elevate her to the sylvan throne as May Queen, where she would wear the imperial crown, and be the toast and bear the sway for a "twelvemonth" to come ; and on the other hand, the loved and lovely had been no less anxious to anticipate whose fair brow was to receive the blossoming coronal of Flora.

The May pole had been previously prepared, and on the morning of the first of May was lying, appropriately decorated, upon the soft bed of creeping evergreen in the centre of the grove. The grove itself had for some days previous given indications of the speedy approach of

warmer weather, and its buds had been swollen nearly to bursting. They now peered out through their velvet lashes at the unwonted scene below them, and finally opened wide their eyelids, as if in utter astonishment at the novel spectacle.

Merry voices were heard in all directions; and joyous bursts of laughter, peal on peal, rung through the grove; while the tread of pattering feet announced that the grove was fast filling with the young, the gay, and the beautiful.

Many of the company were from towns so distant as to have made it necessary for them to travel half of the night; and their restless horses kept up a continual neighing and stamping, which, mingling with the loud and cheerful voices of their riders, gave additional life and animation to the exciting scene. Even animated Nature herself seemed to partake in the festive occasion: the robin poured forth his loudest notes upon the topmost branches of the swaying trees; the bluebird piped high his spring-reminding strain; and the blue jay chattered his noisiest response and turned his most surprising somersets among the waving limbs; while above the open spaces of the grove the swallow whirled and twittered, and cut a thousand fantastic figures in the air.

In the midst of this unbounded excitement, and as if to add a still higher zest to the general delight, the sun and the May pole rose at one and the same time; at which events the youthful portion of the assembly broke out in higher cheers and wilder strains. The glorious old sun shot his golden beams and enlivening rays through the woodland; and the sparkling eyes of twenty expectant damsels reflected rays, if not as lustrous and diffusive, certainly, to those upon whom they chanced to fall, as welcome and exhilarating.

Upon their way through the fields and woods, every green sprig and shoot, together with all the early spring

flowers, had been gathered for the wreath or crown for the May Queen. The garland was now woven, and the evergreen and myrtle, the dewdrop, and violet, and wake-robin, with such other flowers as had yet blossomed, were charmingly and tastefully intertwined therein.

But now came the question of questions — who should be the favored and fortunate nymph who should wear it, and bear off the chief prize of the day to celebrate which they had assembled. And as the young men were engaged in canvassing the exciting question, many a fair one overheard the mention of her name ; and as the sound fell upon her attentive ear it caused the blood to course quicker through her veins, deepening the warm flush upon the cheek, and imparting an added brilliancy to the flashing eye. But a brief discussion sufficed to convince the young men that, in order to make a selection, each must yield something of his claim in behalf of his favorite, and, as only one could be chosen, they would (dropping their personal preferences) cast their votes for the loveliest and purest—not, however, but all were equally worthy.

They now proceeded to ballot ; and when all had voted, Britton Waldron, who was selected to sort and count the votes, declared that Miss Elsie Tufton was chosen to bear the honors of the day by a majority of three over all others. The woods now rang wilder than ever ; the lads threw up their hats, and the lasses waved their handkerchiefs, in token of their unanimous concurrence. A committee was now appointed to wait upon Miss Elsie and conduct her to her seat on the throne, and place the flowery diadem upon her pure, white brow. The committee consisted of three young men, who were to select three of the fairer sex as assistants. The names of those selected for this duty were Britton Waldron, John Bull, and Richard Underhill, who, selecting each a companion, escorted the fair Elsie to her exalted seat.

Each one of the crowning committee was to take hold upon the crown, and, dancing three times around the queen before placing the regal coronet on her polished brow, to sing in time this stanza:—

“ This lovely lass around we pass,
And crown her Queen of May ;
Nor fairer form could wreaths adorn,
This merry-meeting day.”

All eyes were upon Elsie, who occupied the throne with such grace and dignity, that, to the eyes of all, she looked “every inch a queen.” They had danced but once around their lovely sovereign, and once sung their crowning stanza, when Elsie suddenly inquired, in a low but distinct tone,—

“ Who can that lady be yonder, riding through the grove in this direction ? ”

All eyes were at once turned towards her, and as they caught sight of her high-mettled steed, upon which she sat with unusual grace, their attention was immediately arrested, chained, and riveted upon their unexpected visitant. Her horse, as she rode up to them, looked white, so completely frosted was he with his own perspiration ; but, on a closer inspection, proved to be of a jet black, of the deepest polish. At some little distance behind her rode two men, the eldest of whom was a noble-looking man, about the age, apparently, of fifty. He was dressed in the style of a gentleman of that day, and had an air and bearing slightly aristocratic and unmistakably English. He was seated on a large, powerful horse, of a dark roan color, and in his rear rode a footman. He was apparelled in the quaint style not uncommon at the period of which we write. He wore velvet tight breeches, with a short doublet, and a cocked hat, in the ribbon or band of which was stuck his tobacco pipe.

His hair was long, and braided behind in a cue, and tied with eelskin, to which was attached a broad ribbon that reached to his waist. His legs were cased in tight black hose, that met his still tighter breeches at the knee, and passed under them, where the hose were fastened up and the breeches fastened down by a long, silver knee buckle. His high-heeled shoes were also fastened with silver buckles about the size of a turtle's back.

The young lady upon the black bloodhorse was clad in a green broadcloth spencer, with tight sleeves, buttoned nearly to the elbow; a black worsted skirt, and neat shoes, fastened with buckles: a jocky riding cap, with a small plume of black, completed her costume. But so surpassing was her beauty that no one of the numerous throng of observers noticed her dress for a moment. Her hair was as black as the horse on which she rode, and hung in thick, glossy curls over her neck to her shoulders. Her eyes, also, as well as her eyebrows and lashes, were of the deepest black. Her skin had not the dark, yellow tinge so common in most blackhaired persons; neither was it of a repulsive, chalky whiteness; but was perfectly clear and transparent, and betrayed, by its sudden paleness or quickly-deepening glow, every mutation of feeling.

Beautiful in feature and buoyant in form, she looked the very personification of health and the embodiment of grace and accomplishment. As she rode up to the crowd, she bowed most gracefully and smiled; which salutation was instantly returned by all assembled. Her footman, together with his older companion, now came forward and assisted her to dismount; and she now stood before them a little above the medium height, and of form and mould which seemed perfection itself.

As she alighted from her horse, Elsie Tufton, who, as the reader will remember, at the time the stranger appeared in sight was in the midst of her coronation, now

walked deliberately down from her rude throne, and taking up the garland, which, in the astonishment and admiration caused by the lovely stranger's approach, had dropped from the hands of those around her, sung aloud, to the evident surprise of her whom she addressed, —

“Nor fairer form could wreaths adorn,
This merry-meeting day.”

The English gentleman — for such evidently he was — now came forward and very earnestly protested against their making other arrangements than those previously in progress, in which they seemed so happily and (he would add, as an Englishman) so appropriately engaged.

He said he had been in the country but a few years, and had, until the last autumn, resided at Boston, but now lived some ten miles from the enchanting spot in which he now found himself.

When he came to America, he remarked, he had left his two only daughters to finish their education in the old country ; that this one, but a week previous, had landed at Portsmouth ; and that they had been informed, much to their gratification, of the “merry-meeting” holiday by a friend, whom they expected to have met here, and who was to have given him a suitable introduction to those before him ; but as he did not recognize him among those present, he would, by their leave, introduce himself and companion as Matthew Langdell, Esq., and his daughter Rozella.

Elsie, who had walked down from her sylvan throne, now sprang forward to the Englishman's daughter, and was the first to give her hand and a cordial welcome to the glorious grove of “Merry Meeting.” Britton Waldron followed next ; and in quick succession every one present had grasped the hand of Squire Langdell and welcomed himself and his lovely daughter to the new land of their

adoption. So perfectly fascinated were some of the young men, particularly Waldron and Bull, that they were completely disqualified for further proceedings in the way of general gallantry, and, by their absent-minded air and utter indifference to any save the fair stranger, laid themselves open to the keen remarks of their former favorites, who rallied them most unmercifully.

"Now," said Elsie, smiling, "I abdicate the throne in favor and in honor of the fair Rozella Langdell."

At this manifestation of generosity on the part of Elsie repeated cheers went up from all assembled.

"Noble girl!" said one. "Generous creature!" said another.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Squire Langdell, "I thank you all for the kind reception of myself and daughter, but particularly you, Miss Tufton, for your generous proposal to abdicate in her favor; but it would be infringing too much upon the rights of others, and presuming too far upon your own generous impulses, besides breaking up your previously concerted order of arrangements, to allow any change. Therefore, thanking you kindly for the honor shown Rozella, I must, in her behalf, decline the high post of honor to which your partiality would elevate her, and entreat you to go on in the original order of exercises under your present worthy queen."

"And I," said Rozella, "must add my request to that of my dear father. I will assist in any post of duty your kind partiality may assign me, which shall enable me to aid in the coronation of the lady you had selected for your queen; but the wreath was not woven for my brow, and I must decline it."

"The garland," said Elsie, "was woven for the brow of the fairest; therefore, in the presence of Miss Langdell, I peremptorily refuse to receive or wear it."

So strong was the demonstration in approbation of the

sentiments of Elsie that Rozella saw it was of no avail to refuse further ; so, with her father's consent, she went forward and yielded a gracious assent to their solicitations. The former committee, with the addition of Elsie, now surrounded Rozella, and, taking her by both hands, led her in triumph to the throne.

"Well," said Rozella, taking off her cap as she spoke, — at which act a dozen young men sprang forward, eager to secure the honor of holding it, — "here, if it is not a worthy brow, is an honest one ; and I promise you it shall never disgrace the crown you are pleased to place upon it."

Each one now took hold upon the crown and danced around the throne as before, singing, —

"This lovely lass," &c., —

and then placed the flowery crown upon Rozella's brow, while the old woods rang with the shouts of the young and old in such wild peals of joy as they had never experienced since the morning stars sang at their creation.

After the coronation Rozella arose, and in a clear, musical voice, of surpassing and peculiar sweetness, sung as follows : —

How glorious the scene, and how joyful the day,
In the old woods of green, in the young month of May !
So in hearts that are spotless, on earth though they stay,
And old bosoms hold them, 'tis May — always May.

Our lives, like the garland we weave for the queen,
With evergreens twining, 'mid blossoms are seen ;
But a crown that ne'er withers let all wear each day ;
Then, when autumn surrounds us, 'tis May — always May.

A thorn unobserved may perchance join the rose,
And a hand press it deep in the brow that she loves ;
But the brow only wounded, the sting ne'er can stay ;
Where the heart feels no sorrow, 'tis May — always May.

Though strangers we meet, and our friendship is new,
The joys we are tasting we'll long keep in view ;
Till each wreath is woven for the great crowning day,
'Mid garlands immortal, 'tis May — always May.

After the singing of the above, the effect that had been produced upon the company, more by the voice and manner of the fair vocalist than by the words, manifested itself in their long and repeated cheers.

"Now," said Robert Vaughan, after the applause had subsided, "I propose, as ours is no common queen, that we give her an additional title — that we add to her present designation of "Queen of May" that of "Queen of the Forest." For she has put new life and animation into these green old woods, so as to cause every leaf to vibrate and dance with joy from pond to bay and lake. "Why," said he, with kindling enthusiasm, "the old 'merry meeting,' once held upon this sacred ground, was no more to be compared with this than a district school meeting in one of our new settlements can be put in comparison with commencement at Old Cambridge."

"Agreed!" shouted all; and Robert Vaughan was selected to present her the additional badge of honor. He accordingly broke a bough from a young spruce, and on bended knee presented it to the lovely Forest Queen, who graciously accepted the same with courteous words and acknowledging smiles.

At the close of the coronation ceremonies the ladies amused themselves as best suited their individual tastes — some ranging through the grove gathering what flowers were still unplucked, while others strolled upon the shore of the pond and amused themselves by watching the gambols of its finny denizens, or by casting pebbles into its placid bosom to observe the wavy rings which would encircle the place where the surface was disturbed.

Of the other sex both old and young were engaged in

the more athletic exercises of climbing the May pole or the surrounding trees ; jumping, or trying to do so, in the tied-up bag ; and finally in the laughable feat of catching and holding the soaped pig, which a jolly old farmer had brought, as he said, to remind the older part of the company of the May-day sports of Old England. This last performance had for its delighted spectators the fairer portion of the company, who, while they pitied the pig, could not but rejoice at the failures and mishaps of his pursuers. Peals of laughter and all sorts of ironical compliments and cutting jokes and jests greeted the unfortunate wight who was obliged to "forego his hold," and all were convulsed with merriment except, perhaps, the poor pig, who probably could "see nothing to laugh at," but who, we are happy to say, finally left the ground with his ears still safely attached, though perhaps a trifle elongated.

After these sports were over, and as the company were again strolling hither and thither through the grove, Elsie, who had been standing with Rozella on the throne, cast her eyes about her to ascertain the whereabouts of one Charles Cutts, who had been very attentive to her for several months, and who had exerted himself more than any other one to advance her interest and secure her election to the throne. She finally discovered him sitting on a little hillock at the foot of a tree, against which his back rested, while over his right knee was thrown his left leg, around which were clasped both his hands in a grasp as firm as a vice. He held in his mouth one end of a long piece of bark that had been stripped from the May pole, and which he was chewing violently.

"Well, Charles," said Elsie, approaching him, "we are having a nice time for our first May day."

"Nice time !" said Cutts, rather tartly ; "the nice time was entirely spoiled when you resigned your honors and

placed that young Englishwoman upon the throne to which I had exerted myself to the utmost to place you."

"I am well aware," replied Elsie, "that you have used all your influence in my behalf, and I assure you I shall always be grateful for the same. The kind favor of your advocacy will never be forgotten. But, in the first place, she is a stranger, and can but consider it a mark of respect on our part, and one, too, by which we signify our willingness to receive her into our warmest friendship. Besides, we shall be gainers by the act, inasmuch as the influence and example of one so accomplished and well bred as she evidently is will do much in smoothing off our sharp corners and improving our awkward habits."

"We should be just before we are generous," replied Cutts; "and as to your improving by her example, you, Elsie, exhibit in your own person a truer model of the real accomplishments of woman as she should be than that boarding-school girl yonder or all the other ladies of London like her, with their affected airs and false ideas of all that is truly womanly."

"Nonsense!" cried Elsie; "you mistake the young lady entirely. And then she is so very handsome—such eyes, and skin, and hair; and her form, too, is perfection itself. Nothing could be more finely modelled. I assure you I have not the presumption to be crowned Queen of May in the presence of one who so far surpasses me in every necessary qualification for that high station."

"That Miss Langdell has beauty," replied Cutts, "I will not deny; still it is not of the style I admire."

"What style do you prefer?" interrupted Elsie. "I should be pleased to see the person whose beauty you would prefer to hers."

"You can," replied Cutts, "and I will show her to you," at the same time drawing from his pocket a large snuffbox, in the cover of which was set a mirror. "There," said

he, holding it up to her, "is one whose modest beauty I much prefer to that of the dashing young creature yonder."

"Halloo!" shouted Britton Waldron, suddenly breaking in upon them; "making love, are you, Cutts? I think you had better come with me, and give Miss Tufton an opportunity to join the ladies on the beach."

By the time he had closed Elsie was on her way thither, and Waldron and Cutts were sauntering towards another part of the grove.

"Cutts," said Waldron, as they started, "is not that young stranger the most perfect specimen of womankind you ever put eyes upon?"

"No," said Cutts, abruptly; "the one you drove from me a moment since is far more perfect."

"Indeed!" said Waldron. "But I am rejoiced to find that you think so; that is one obstacle less than I feared I should have to contend with."

"How so?" asked Cutts; "I hope you are not in love at first sight."

"In love or out," said Waldron, "I can scarcely tell, and hardly whether I am in the body or out. But one thing I do know—that I never before saw a lady I so much admired or who came up to my ideal of what a woman should be."

They were now interrupted by the approach of Bull, who came swaggering along in his usual rude and boisterous manner, and intruded his unwelcome, yet as he thought important, presence into their company. Like his father, Bull was a man of violent and ungovernable passions, and so thoroughly coarse, brutal, and headstrong in every way, that his name did not belie his surly disposition, although it had received the classical nickname of "Taurus;" so that he went by the expressive name of "Jack Taurus," by which title he will be henceforth designated.

"Faith," said Jack, "that new comer in the green jacket is a rare one. She does honor to the crown rather than the crown to her. She is a regular diamond," continued Jack, "and just fit to be in a crown herself. Now, as they say a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband, I'll make sure of the gem for my own brow. Ha! ha! You'll see, now, if I don't obtain it, and wear it grandly, too."

Waldron now saw that he had a rival, and a formidable one; for he well knew that, although Bull's suit might be met by the lady with a flat and final refusal, still much was to be feared from the malicious and revengeful spirit which in that event would be fully and fearfully aroused. He saw the necessity of keeping his own passion closely concealed; and accordingly, affecting to laugh heartily, with a semi-confidential manner advised Jack not to act with his usual haste and impetuosity, for, as the lady had been educated in refined and fashionable circles, and was accustomed to polite and delicate attentions, she might be alarmed at the fierce demonstrations of so formidable-looking an animal as he, Taurus, was, and forever refuse his suit.

In the mean time Richard Underhill had commenced his attentions and flatteries to the young ladies, in the course of which so completely did he show his double facedness that from that day forward he bore the name of "Dick Janus," after the well-known deity of ancient Rome who had two faces, looking in opposite directions.

He first went to Elsie, and, addressing her as the rightful sovereign, intimated that she ought not to have relinquished her claim to the crown in favor of an utter stranger, and that she, Elsie, would have worn the crown with as much grace and dignity as the Forest Queen herself.

He next, and as he thought unobservedly, approached Rozella, and expressed to her his extreme happiness at her opportune arrival in their midst, inasmuch as until that

event there was no one present truly and really qualified either by their beauty or accomplishments to receive the honors of the day; but that *she* wore the garland with angelic grace and true queenly dignity.

Rozella, as Janus first addressed her, turned and listened to his harangue in a quiet, ladylike manner; but as he closed, she coldly and haughtily turned her back upon him, without a single word, and left him to draw his own conclusions as to the effect of his fulsome flatteries.

The repast with which they had come provided was now served, after which songs were sung and speeches made, in the latter of which Squire Langdell took a prominent part; and then the company bade adieu to the enchanting spot and sports of the first May day at "Merry Meeting" Pond or within the borders of their loved Laconia.

CHAPTER II.

EXPLORATION OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS BY NEAL. — SUPERSTITIONS OF THE INDIANS CONCERNING THE SAME.

As the celebration of May day at "Merry Meeting" Pond, a sketch of which we have attempted to give above, occurred in a time of peace,—one of those brief intervals between the dreadful Indian and Indian and French wars that raged in this portion of New Hampshire,—and as some of the young men above mentioned had been soldiers or were the descendants of those who had borne arms and fought and died in the struggle for the success of their adopted country, and as they subsequently became renowned for their valor and heroism, it would seem essential that the narrator of these facts should go into a more particular account of their genealogy and history.

Matthew Langdell, Esq., has already given a sufficient introduction of himself and daughter. But he omitted on that occasion to inform the company that his wife, the mother of the fair Rozella, was born in the wilds of America, at a place called Little Harbor. Her father's name was Walter Neal. Gorges and Mason, the original proprietors, had divided their lands; and the wild region east of the Piscataqua was relinquished to Gorges and took the name of Maine, while the tract west of this river and extending back into the country sixty miles was confirmed to Mason. Mason had previously resided in the county

of Hampshire, in England, and thus gave to his extensive grant in the new world the name of New Hampshire. The colonists of Mason's grant were divided into distinct communities, and were known as the Upper and Lower Plantations. The first superintendent of the Lower Plantation was Captain Walter Neal, of Portsmouth.

Captain Neal had a decided passion for roving and for voyages of discovery; and while the leading men of the Plantation were busy with confederations and similar important affairs, he took his departure to explore the White Mountains; for a feature so prominent in the scenery of New Hampshire could not but attract his observation. The interviews he had often had with the Indians and the information obtained from them had also excited his curiosity, for they had always held these awful summits in superstitious veneration. The red man imagined them peopled with invisible beings. In their cliffs and waterfalls and in the clouds that hung upon their towering heads he saw the Great Spirit enthroned. In the revels of the storm and in the thunders that rattled from cliff to cliff and echoed in deafening answers from gulf to gulf he heard the voice of his anger. He believed also that he shines in the stars, that he smiles upon the lakes, that he breathes in the secret recesses of grotto and cave, and that each sunbeam that warms and every flower that blossoms is radiant with his love; that he frowns in the wintry blast and refreshes in the summer zephyrs, and that the first blush of morning and the last lingering ray of twilight are but his earliest and his latest smiles. Hence they had ever supposed that any intrusion into their sacred precincts would be resented by their invisible inhabitants and call down speedy and merited punishment upon the head of the sacrilegious invader.

But the same mysteries that prevented the red man from exploring the mountains served as an attractive and irre-

sistible charm to the mind of the white man, and a still stronger inducement may have been the gold they supposed to be hidden in their stony bosoms. So deeply impressed was the imagination of Captain Neal, that he, with two companions only, set out on foot through the dense wilderness, and was the first adventurer who had dared to explore their secret chambers and gloomy recesses. They supposed that every rock of a yellow hue contained gold; and some glistening minerals which they obtained led them to bestow on these grand old mountains the name of the "Crystal Hills." But Neal soon returned home with a saddened and disappointed heart; for the "fine gold" proved to be but mica, and the gems and diamonds were metamorphosed into garnet and crystallized quartz.

This expedition over, another, of a different character, succeeded. The whole seaboard was alarmed by the appearance of a pirate, one Dixy Bull, with a crew of fifteen others, who, in search of gold, had taken several boats and had rifled the Fort of Pemaquid. Neal, in conjunction with others from Boston, equipped and manned four pinaces, shallops, and barks, and proceeded to Pemaquid. But before he had landed a furious storm set in; and Bull with his men, rushing on board in hot haste, weighed anchor and put out of port, leaving, in their hurry, a woman who had accompanied him. So furious was the storm that Neal either could not or dare not follow; so that Bull escaped, and ran the length of his line, the end of which he found at last in England, where justice was satisfied and he received his deserts.

Soon after this Neal returned to England, with his wife and a young daughter twelve years of age, whose tripping feet had gambolled as innocently as waltzed the breathing blossoms amid which she strolled, while her dimpled cheeks glowed with a modest hue which seemed but flitting reflections of the ripening fruit of her own native

"Strawberry Bank." She subsequently became the wife of Matthew Langdell and mother of the charming Rozella.

John Bull, alias "Jack Taurus," was nearly as old as Squire Langdell, but was possessed of one of those iron constitutions which seem never to grow old; so that, priding himself on his vigor, he did not choose as he advanced in years to relax in the least his assiduities to the fair sex, but was ever ready to lay siege to any virgin heart, whether young or old, making small allowance for disparity of years. But he was never satisfied with his conquest for any great length of time, but like his prototype, the Taurian Jupiter, celebrated for his transformations in mythological fable, he was continually roving in quest of "fresh fields and pastures new." Rozella had quickly discovered his true character, and held him in complete contempt and detestation. His mother was the woman the pirate Dixy Bull had left behind in his flight from Pemaquid, and he was born a few months after Bull's hasty departure from that port.

His mother, not having the natural instinct even of animal attachment to her offspring, carried Jack into that part of the country inhabited by the Ossipee Indians, and left him in a gap of the mountains near one of the Indian wigwams, where he was soon discovered by the squaws, who fed and housed him in the winter, while in the summer season he subsisted as best he could. Thus Jack grew up, as he in afterlife declared, among the wild beasts and reptiles of the mountains, who were not only his companions, but not unfrequently his food. Yet Jack had improved wonderfully after being brought out into civilized life by some hunters, who discovered him while engaged in trapping beaver. His mind was naturally strong; he easily learned whatever was laid before him; and so retentive was his memory that he could repeat the whole of a discourse, after once hearing it, nearly verbatim, and always retained it.

But one thing he could never learn—and that was, to govern his passions; although, had he not become enamoured of Rozella,—whose charms and accomplishments so bewitched him as to completely addle his brain,—he might, perhaps, have ultimately become a respectable and influential member of society.

Britton Waldron was the son of Major Waldron, who was a brave and kind officer in the early Indian wars; and whenever a treaty of peace was made, which was frequently declared but seldom long observed, the Indians regarded him as their father and friend.

But, as he was an officer, he felt himself bound to obey the governor's command; and therefore, contrary to his own judgment, lent himself to a stratagem which cost him his life. The government sent on two companies to make prisoners of the Indians in his vicinity, and who were now friendly and peaceably disposed. Waldron dissuaded them from making an open attack, but proposed to the Indians that they should have a training and sham fight after the English manner, to which they assented. His own men and the two government companies formed one party, and the Indians another.

Causing the Indians to fire the first volley, the word of command was given, and the Indians surrounded and taken prisoners before they had time to become aware of the intended treachery. Two hundred Indians were taken, eight or ten of whom, on proof being produced of their having murdered Englishmen, were hanged, and the remainder sold into slavery in foreign parts.

His subsequent history will be related in the recital of the events of the contest which took place soon after the May-day celebration at Merry Meeting Pond, and in which most of those present at that event were engaged.

Britton Waldron, like his father, had seen hard fighting in the contests with the Indians from his early boyhood,

and was never known to have turned his back upon a foe.

Charles Cutts was a worthy, brave young man, as his afterlife will show. He was the son of John Cutts, of Portsmouth, an eminent merchant, who was chosen president of the council by which New Hampshire was governed after the separation of her union with Massachusetts, which had existed for thirty-eight years.

Robert Vaughan was the son of William Vaughan, who was also a member of the first council of New Hampshire.

Elsie Tufton was the descendant of Robert Tufton, who took the name of Mason in compliance with the conditional clause of Mason's will, and which it was necessary for him to assume in order to come into possession of his vast estate.

Richard Underhill, alias Dick Janus, was the son of the twofaced John Underhill, who was living and fawning upon the government of the colony, while at heart he was an infamous traitor, and was secretly engaged in writing letters to the government of England against the colonies.

CHAPTER III.

DOLLY PLOT'S ISLAND AND HER SCHEMES. — BETROTHAL OF CHARLES CUTTS AND ELSIE TUFTON.

HAVING now given a sketch of the principal characters in the scenes and sorrows of the wars, and which we hope has not been tedious, we are now on open ground to proceed with the events themselves.

From the day when Rozella Langdell made her advent in the smiling grove of Laconia upon her black blood-horse, which had been presented her before leaving England by her uncle, and named Flying Cloud, she was the admired of all observers. True, at that time she was very young, and, like an early bud, was just bursting her rougher lamina of spring covering, and ready to bloom and blossom into womanhood ; yet so radiant was her face, so finely modelled her form, so elastic her step, and her disposition and manner so gentle and winning, that each of the young men of all the country round, unwilling to resign to another, without a struggle, a prize so rare and priceless, frequented her father's house as the very Canaan of their desire ; and of these, many a Moses climbed to the Pisgah's height of his towering hopes, and gazed with longing eyes over the swelling Jordan of another's love upon the promised *hand* ; and although they did not "die without the sight," one only possessed her confidence ; and he was the fortunate and thrice happy Britton Waldron.

From the day of his betrothment, all that was ever possessed by Jack Taurus of kindness and regard towards Waldron was changed into the bitterest enmity, hatred, and determination of revenge; and many were the plans and plots he laid to destroy him. So infatuated was the rough and uncouth Taurus with the charms of the fair Rozella that he was completely blind to the disgust and detestation which she not only felt but manifested towards him, even in his own presence. Every cold, passing glance she gave him, each avoidance of his company and sudden withdrawal from any group which he joined, was interpreted by Taurus to read, in plain English, "She loves me, but is too modest to acknowledge her passion."

Such being his impression, he imagined that, could he only devise some scheme for the removal or destruction of Waldron, every obstacle in the way of his success would be removed; for he considered that he (Taurus) stood at least second in the favor and affections of the Forest Queen. He therefore, as had been his wont on other occasions, had recourse to a notorious fortune teller in the vicinity, one Dolly Plot, to assist him in devising ways and means for Waldron's overthrow.

Dolly Plot lived on an acute angle in a fork of Coheco River, which was so nearly surrounded by water as to have obtained the name of Dolly's Island. She was of middle age, and had once been considered quite handsome; and when she shook the blue devils out of herself, and appeared in society in her best style, some remnants of her former beauty were still visible. She had been well educated, and in her better days, in England, had moved in fashionable society.

After she had concocted a scheme for the disgrace and downfall of Waldron, she one day intruded her unwelcome presence into the house of Mr. Tufton, on pretence of wishing to obtain pecuniary aid; but was commanded by

Elsie to leave the house, as she was wholly unworthy of aid or sympathy. As she was about leaving, she sneeringly retorted to Elsie, "that she had better not assume such lofty airs in her presence ; for *she* had once been the admiration of a refined and fashionable circle, and was called, not only an idol, but an angel."

"And you are all of that now," replied Elsie, "but an idol at whose shrine the totally depraved alone worship ; and although you may still be angel, you are an angel of darkness, whose powers of attraction extend only to foul and fallen spirits like yourself."

After this repulse Dolly feigned herself sick, and sent for Waldron to visit her, intimating that, in case she did not recover, she would bequeath him her little island ; but, receiving no reply to this artful message, she changed her tone, and pretended that she wished to consult him on important business. Had he complied with her request, Taurus was to disgrace him by immediately reporting the fact of his visit to Rozella, to which he could add such other lying embellishments as his depraved imagination might suggest, could he only have that fact upon which to base his atrocious falsehoods.

But Waldron, though he did not know of this intended scheme, was kept from falling into the snare so artfully contrived more by his thoughts and attention being absorbed by Rozella than by suspicion or fear of Dolly Plot ; and inasmuch as he was thereby kept from the contaminating atmosphere of the iniquitous Dolly Plot, and also shielded from the pestiferous breath of the slanderer, Taurus, he was, on the whole, equally fortunate.

Thus the affair went on for months — love and happiness at the house of Squire Langdell, and hatred and revenge at the hut on Dolly's Island.

Thirteen years had nearly elapsed since the seizure and selling into slavery of the two hundred Indians by Major

Waldron. Some of the "strange Indians," as they were termed, had escaped from servitude and returned. These were now lingering about the vicinity, and were often seen in close consultation with Taurus and Janus in the adjacent woods, while at night they were observed to accompany them to the island and hut of Dolly Plot.

It has often been remarked that one misfortune is sure to be followed immediately by another, and that one enemy possesses the power to rouse into life many more. At the precise time of the return of the Indians who had been transported, another enemy, of great power and influence over the Indians in his vicinity, was aroused in the north-eastern section of the territory.

The lands from Penobscot to Nova Scotia had been ceded to the French by the treaty of Breda, in exchange for the Island of St. Christopher. On these lands the Baron De St. Castine resided. He was on terms of the greatest intimacy with the Indians, and had several of their women for his wives, among whom was the daughter of the great sachem, Monokawando. The lands granted by the crown of England to the Duke of York (at this time King James II.) interfered with St. Castine's plantation, as the duke claimed to the River St. Croix for his boundary. Castine had built a fort and stationed a force at Pemaquid to protect his property. A ship landed some wine at Piscataqua, supposing it to be within the French territory, which was seized by the duke's agent.

A quarrel ensued and a new line run, by which Castine's house and fort were embraced in the English territory. The English then plundered Castine's house and fort, and robbed him of his arms and goods.

This last action provoked Castine to excite the Indians to a new war. To add still more fuel to the flame so nearly ready to burst out, some English sailors, in passing up the Saco, had observed the squaw of the sachem Squando in

a canoe, with her infant child in her lap ; and having heard that Indian children could swim as naturally as young swans, in order to test the matter, overset the canoe. The child sank at once ; but the mother, with her bosom alive to its danger, instantly plunging into the water, succeeded in bringing it up alive, although it lived but a short time. So enraged was Squando at this base act of the English that he also employed all his influence to excite the Indians and arouse them to avenge his wrongs. He fully succeeded, and the storm soon burst.

Castine and Squando had but an easy task to perform in arousing Mogg Hegan, for his bosom was already thirsting for English blood, to atone for the dark deeds of robbery and plunder his tribe and priest had suffered at the hands of Colonel Westbrook. Mogg Hegan was the chief sachem of Norridgewock, and Bomazeen was an inferior chief of the same tribe, called Canibas, or Kennebecs, that were at this place.

Colonel Westbrook headed a company of English soldiers to Norridgewock to destroy the Indians, together with a French priest named Ralle, or Rasles, and who was living with the Indians at that place, where he had also built a church ; but when they arrived there the village was deserted and not a soul to be seen. But they found and brought away a singular box, known by the name of Father Ralle's strong box, in which he kept all his private papers, and carried with him upon his back as he traversed the forests from Norridgewock to Canada as a missionary or evangelist. By the letters contained in this box, it was fully proved that the priest was secretly scheming for the destruction of the English with the French governor of Canada, Count Frontenac, whose letters the box also contained.

But while the murderous storm of war had been gathering in darker gloom and seemed ready to burst upon

the land from all the tribes from Canada to the ocean, the kindlier and better feelings of our nature had also been ripening and growing to maturity in the settlements of Laconia. The mutual attachment which, at their first interview at Merry Meeting grove, Waldron and Rozella had felt for each other, had grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength; and apparently the time was not far distant when the hand of the Forest Queen and that of him who had assisted in making her such would be indissolubly united. And at last it was surmised, then whispered confidentially, and at last publicly proclaimed on every hand, that the day was fixed when Britton Waldron and Rozella Langdell should be forever joined in the silken ties of wedlock.

Elsie Tufton and Charles Cutts had been equally fortunate in the improvement of their happy meetings and in finding favor in each other's sight. Cutts had confessed his passion, and asked and obtained her consent to confer upon him the greatest earthly boon in the gift of Heaven by becoming his wife. The next annual Thanksgiving, which was but a few months later, was the day upon which, by the free consent and approval of all interested, they were to effect that mutual union so "devoutly to be wished."

But at this time the intelligence came from all quarters from the borders of the settlement that some of the cattle had been killed by the Indians, and others had had their tongues cut out and been otherwise maimed and maltreated. The next day news was brought in that a house had been burned and three persons found dead and scalped at the doorway, and two of the family were missing. A little reconnoitring was made in the vicinity of Dolly's Island; and Taurus and Janus, with a few strange Indians, were discovered. Taurus and two of the Indians had each a reeking scalp attached to their girdles, while the

others had beef and tongues from the cattle that had been killed. A report having been made to Squire Langdell, a little council of war was held by the neighbors; and it was resolved that, for their greater safety, they would proceed down the River Cocheco to the blockhouses where the settlers had safely garrisoned in former Indian wars.

They accordingly took their departure, some down the river in boats, some on horseback, and some on foot.

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CHAPTER IV.

DEPARTURE OF THE SETTLERS TO THE GARRISONS ON THE COCHECO. — ROZELLA RETURNS FOR HER BUNDLE. — SHE IS WAYLAID BY TAURUS AND JANUS. — SURPRISE AND MASSACRE OF THE GARRISONS, AND DEATH OF THE HANDSOME CROSS.

THERE were five blockhouses on the banks of the Cochecho, one of which belonged to the Waldrons. Rozella and some of the company were to proceed, accompanied by Waldron, to his father's garrison, and the others were to be distributed to Otis's, Heard's, and Coffin's garrison. They had gone nearly a mile when Rozella discovered that she had left behind a little bundle of clothing which she had hastily tied up in a handkerchief; and in spite of the protests of her companions, she resolved to return for it; so, assuring them she would directly overtake them, she gave a free rein to Flying Cloud, and bounded away. The company went slowly forward and finally reached the garrison, but Rozella had not made her appearance. They would have returned immediately for her but for the assurance of Major Waldron that, for the present at least, there was no danger to be apprehended from the Indians; and, moreover, Britton, who in order to apprise other settlers of the danger had taken a circuitous route, had not yet come in; therefore they desisted from their intent, though not without some anxiety on her account.

The sun had set, and the evening mists began to settle

upon the distant mountains and over the high forest trees, when Britton came in, and anxiously did he ask for the whereabouts of Rozella. Finding she had not yet arrived, he, with quivering lip and a cheek blanched to a ghastly whiteness, instantly rallied his men and hurried back in quest of her. They had proceeded but half a mile when, to their great joy, they saw her dash from the forest upon Flying Cloud, who leaped a fallen tree and struck into the main road before them. The horse was completely covered with blood and foam, and fell dead the moment he reached the road. Rozella had nothing upon her head; and the bundle for which she had returned was wanting, as well as her cap. She had returned, as she informed them, and procured her bundle, and was hastily pursuing her way back to her friends when three of the strange Indians appeared in the road directly before her. She wheeled her horse to escape their grasp, when, to her utter astonishment, Taurus and Janus, with three Indians, were now before her. Taurus then spoke, and demanded that she stop and yield herself a prisoner, and no harm should befall her. Her only reply was the giving of Flying Cloud one sharp cut with her riding whip, at which he dashed furiously forward, prostrating Taurus—who, now feeling sure of his prize, had already stretched out his hand to grasp her horse's bridle—completely in the dust, together with one of the Indians, whose heads Flying Cloud, safely bearing his heroic rider, had cleared at one leap. But the brave steed was mortally wounded, having received a deep and fatal thrust from the long knife of one of the Indians and a ball through the flank from the gun of the cowardly Janus. Nevertheless, he bore her bravely and swiftly on, although her course was entirely at random, until she came suddenly upon a young and athletic Indian, whom at a glance she recognized as Wenane, the son of Chocorua, who was subsequently chief of the

Pequawketts. He had often received various acts of kindness at her father's house. As she was wholly at loss to know in what direction to proceed, and, moreover, as her noble steed showed signs of giving out, she ventured to halt and ask his assistance and protection. "The young Forest Queen," replied the Indian, "shall have both. When Wenane turns his face and his heart from the palefaced squaw whose white hand gave him food, and made his bed by the fire, and smoothed the pillow till her light hand made it soft for his weary head, then shall the river turn back in its course and the high mountains be as the sandy plain." He then with a part of his blanket plugged up as well as he was able the bleeding side of the horse, and accompanied Rozella to a footpath in the forest, which he said would lead her directly to the above-named clearing. Thanking him gratefully for his timely assistance, she again gave Flying Cloud the rein, and, urging him to his utmost speed, was just able to reach the spot where Waldron and his men first discovered her.

The company generally were exceedingly alarmed at these hostile demonstrations, except the venerable Major Waldron. He was now nearly eighty years of age, and prided himself highly on his knowledge of Indian habits and character. He now assured them that he could foretell to a certainty when an Indian war was about to break out, and that there was no danger or necessity for alarm, at least for the present. And so completely did his confident assurances allay their apprehensions and quiet their fears that the younger portions of the settlers at the various garrisons had resolved upon a boat ride, the next day, down the Cochecho.

"Now," said Britton Waldron to Rozella, "lay aside all your fears, and we will be thankful for our deliverance in the past and happy for the brilliant prospects of the future."

"But I fear," replied Rozella, "that our present happiness will be but of short duration."

"O," cried the lighthearted Elsie, "I think it is best to be happy while we may, for trouble will come speedily enough without our assistance; and as we are to have a fine boat ride to-morrow, we must all be gay and cheerful. Come, Charles," said she, turning to Cutts, who wore his hair so long as to fall to his shoulders, "here is some nice pink paper, which was left from that of which we made the cartridges; so I will roll up your long locks, on which you seem to pride yourself so much, for I would like to see you appear becomingly in the morning, so that you may not frighten the fish out of the water on our excursion down the river."

"Perhaps," said Cutts, "it might be advisable, for it may serve to keep my locks out of the hands of the redskins, and I protest against having the scalp slid off my crown by the bloodthirsty wolves."

After this operation was completed and other pleasant remarks bandied among the company the party separated; Britton Waldron and Rozella proceeded to the garrison of Major Waldron, and Cutts to that of Otis, while Elsie remained at Heard's, where the above conversation had occurred. When Britton and Rozella arrived at the house of the major, they found that a squaw and the chief Masandowit—both, as they supposed, friendly Indians—had put up there for the night. Major Waldron had provided them a supper; and while sitting at the table Masandowit with his accustomed familiarity inquired, "Brother Waldron, what would you do if the strange Indians should come?" The major carelessly replied that he could assemble a hundred men by merely raising his finger. As this conversation was carried on in a light and jocular tone, no importance was attached to it, and in unsuspecting confidence the families of all the garrisons retired to rest.

When all was quiet, and the thick gloom of night had settled down like a pall as if to cover the dreadful deed of impending slaughter, the chief and the squaw arose and opened the doors and the gates leading to the house, when the strange Indians, whom the major had deceived and taken and sold into bondage thirteen years previously, rushed in.

They broke down the door of the major's apartment, an inner room, but were repulsed by the major, who, although borne down by the weight of eighty years, leaped from his bed, and, sword in hand, drove them through several doors. Britton Waldron and the major's son-in-law, Abraham Lee, sprang from their beds, and found the old man engaged in deadly combat with the Indians, two of whom were rolling in their own blood at his feet. Britton for a moment kept them at bay with the tomahawk he had snatched from the belt of one of those who had fallen; and the major turned for his other arms, when a blow from a hatchet fell upon his forehead, turning a large patch of his scalp over his eyes, and his gray hairs trailed mournfully over his wrinkled features. At the same moment Britton, in a dreadful hand-to-hand encounter, had buried his tomahawk in the face of his grim foe; but at the next he also lay stunned and apparently lifeless from the numerous blows of another. Lee rushed to the awful death struggle only to have his head laid open nearly to his shoulders, and he, too, sank in death with the others.

Rozella was seized by several Indians at once, and tied to the handle of the door with strong cords, as was also Mrs. Lee. They now dragged Major Waldron — still alive, though unable to offer any resistance — to the hall, and seating him in his own arm chair, which they raised upon a table, the transported but now returned Indians walked deliberately up in succession and drew their knives

quite to the bone across his forehead, face, and breast ; each one, as he did so, tauntingly crying out, "I cross out my account."

They then cut off his nose and ears, which they forced into his mouth ; and when he had become faint from the loss of blood and was falling from the table, they held his own sword under him, which pierced his heart and put an end to his misery. This fiendish deed of slaughter they compelled Rozella and Major Waldron's own daughter, Mrs. Lee, to witness, until, overcome by the horrid spectacle, they fainted and sunk senseless upon the floor. When they revived and sensibility had returned, the Indians were ransacking the cellar and other parts of the house in search of food.

They then looked among the dead bodies for that of Britton Waldron, whom they supposed to have been killed ; but it was not to be found. When the Indians returned, so enraged were they at the escape of Waldron, that, with uplifted tomahawks, they rushed to the women to despatch them at once, so that no more should escape. A powerful blow was aimed at and about falling upon the head of Rozella, when an agile form, with the rapidity of lightning, flew in through the outer door and received the blow from the haft of the weapon into his outstretched hand. As quick as thought he wrested it from the assailant's hand, and with a voice that stilled the infernal whoops, which had not ceased since the savages had gained an entrance, cried out, —

"Enough! By your own acknowledgment you have crossed out your accounts and balanced the bloody books ; and whoever takes the life of the young Forest Queen, or sheds but a single drop of her blood, the same moment his life shall pay the forfeit at my hands."

As the baffled assailants retreated from the apartment, her brave rescuer — whom Rozella did not recognize in his

war habiliments — turned, and, raising from his brow the band of eagles' plumes, Wenane stood before her.

At the same time these murderous deeds were being perpetrated, another band of Indian warriors, led by Villieu, upon the concerted scheme of Castine, Monokawando, Mogg Hekon, and Squando, had divided into small squads, and were scouring the country and attacking the settlers at Portsmouth and Dover.

One band, led by Bomazeen, had passed up the Coche-co and attacked the forts of Otis and the Coffins at the moment of the attack upon Major Waldron's. The friendly squaws who had entered the garrisons of Otis and the two Coffins arose in the night, opened the doors, and admitted the Indians to the dreadful work of slaughter. There were more men in these garrisons than in Waldron's; and the attack, if not more fiendish and horrible, was certainly more frightful and terrific. The savage whoops and the deafening yells that howled up from around the devoted blockhouses must have amazed and astonished the savages themselves, and incited them to more fiendish acts of cruelty and revenge.

The men within the garrisons discharged their guns as the Indians entered, and, having killed a number of the foremost, rushed hand to hand to the deadly struggle. Charles Cutts, the bravest and most daring of the English, had mown a swath nearly through the ranks of these satanic tares, when the murderous hatchet fell upon one side of his head, cutting the skin and ear to the bone, and burying itself in his shoulder. He caught the bloody weapon by the handle, drew it out, and bounding, like the panther on his prey, upon the perpetrator, buried the hatchet, red with his own blood, deep in the redskin's brain. At the same instant a powerful blow nearly severed his arm from his body, it hanging only by the skin; but he again caught the cruel implement with the other

hand, and was about to fell another foe, when he was knocked down and his scalp stripped off while he still lived.

Many others had fought as bravely as Cutts, and each had slain his quota before falling himself. Of the Indians, the most diabolical was that villanous Bloody Bones, old Bomazeen, who, in the sickening strife, snatched a smiling nursling from its mother's breast and dashed out its brains by her own head, who, dripping with the gushing gore of her innocent offspring, fell with her mutilated babe to swell the ghastly heaps of the slain.

In many spots the blood was ankle deep ; and beside the dead the wounded and dying lay piled together, writhing in their own curdling blood.

But Heard's garrison had been saved by the barking of a dog. Its inmates had rallied, and, discovering the plot by finding the door unfastened, ejected the squaw, who had been kindly allowed to sleep by the fire, *sans ceremonie*.

There were but a few men in this garrison, and, to deceive their foes, the women put on hats, and, taking a musket, ran to the windows, where their heads only were visible, and discharged their guns in rapid succession. Thus the Indians supposed Heard's garrison to be more strongly manned than either of the others, and after the first attack avoided it. For this reason the squad to whom the attack and slaughter of this garrison was assigned had passed over to assist in the bloody onslaught on the other houses, soon to return, however, with other spirits sevenfold more devilish than themselves.

When they returned with their captives and the scalps they had taken it was nearly sunrise, and the morning light but too plainly shone upon the ghastly corpses in the deserted garrisons.

As they approached, Elsie and the other women, in their assumed manly character, again flew to the window and discharged their muskets. Although they had heard the

awful whoops and terrific outcries from the other houses, they did not know but their friends had been as fortunate as themselves.

As Elsie flew to the window at the last discharge, the first person she recognized was Rozella ; but so dejected were her looks and so woful her appearance, as, tied with cords, she stood bound and helpless, that Elsie, overcome by the painful sight, involuntarily dropped her musket and sank with it upon the floor. She had nearly swooned, when the piercing thought flashed across her mind to ascertain if Charles, her affianced husband, was among the captives. She sprang again to the window ; but he was not to be seen. As she still gazed for him, a tall, straight, and exceedingly handsome crossbreed, who was passing in front of the others, attracted her notice. As he turned proudly upon his heel and brought his left side to her view, so that she could clearly discern the scalps at his girdle, she gave a shriek so shrill and piercing as to silence for the moment the din of the howling pack without. All the pangs that blood and carnage could produce seized her breaking heart ; for at his girdle, and reeking in his own precious blood, hung the scalp of the only being she had ever truly loved—the worthy and heroic Charles Cutts. His hair still rolled in the pink papers her own hands had prepared, and precisely as she had left it the previous evening.

Notwithstanding the Indians were already cutting through the door of the garrison, she flew to it with the wildness of desperation, unbolted and threw it wide open. So like a spirit from the clouds did she appear to the awe-struck Indians, that, as she opened the door, they involuntarily drew back. She passed out by them with a determined air and a resolution strong as death itself. So quickly did she draw the long war knife from the belt of an Indian, as she passed him, that he knew not the loss of

his weapon until he saw it plunged with the rapidity of lightning to the very hilt in the heart of the handsome halfbreed, who fell dead at her feet. She instantly tore the scalp of Cutts from his girdle, and, pressing it wildly yet tenderly to her bosom, flew back into the garrison and bolted the door again before one of the astonished group of savages could move his charmed feet from the ground.

"A daring spirit," said Villieu, as he drew back with a shudder from the house, "and one with whom we must not trifle."

"Yes," said Bomazeen, "that was the same shriek I heard in the clouds when the fiery Tarrateens murdered the great sovereign Bashaba and his people at Pemaquid and carried off his women."

"Ugh!" said Squando, "those eyes were the same balls of fire I saw dancing over the bog at Lamprey River after we had killed the brave Colonel Winthrop Hilton and buried him and the other palefaced dogs in the slimy pool."

"I think," said Masandowit, "that we had better divide our plunder and captives and leave the place at once."

The others assented, and they moved from the vicinity of the garrison to cast lots for the possession of the prisoners. They were all anxious to possess Rozella, but yielded their claims in favor of that of the chief second in authority at Norridgewock, for the following reasons. The handsome halfbreed slain by the avenging hand of Elsie was Weseme, the son of the celebrated Ralle by an Indian woman who had served as his laundress. His beauty was the topic of discourse to all observers. His hair was black like an Indian's, but of a soft and fine texture, and of a tendency to curl. Unlike Indians, he wore a black

and thinly-set beard. His cap was of scarlet-dyed fur ; and upon his hunting frock he wore four silver bells, which designated him as the leader in their excursions through the forests.

He also carried on his person a written roll of the names of those over whom he had command, and had also a devotional book.

Therefore it was, said Bomazeen, because the son of good Father Ralle and the handsomest young man in all the land had been slain that he would have the handsomest white squaw to carry him, to appease his anger and soothe his sorrow. And besides, the great chief, Mogg Hegan, wished for another wife, and was very anxious to add a palefaced squaw to his already large list of darker beauties ; and so had left the selection to his judgment. Rozella was accordingly assigned to Bomazeen, and started with several other captives for the Canibas tribe at Norridgewock, while the remainder were distributed among the various tribes at the north-east.

Britton Waldron, on regaining his senses, found himself so weak and powerless as to almost prevent him from keeping his feet ; but, summoning up all his strength, he hastened from the apartment so lately the scene of his bloody encounter. As he approached Rozella, lying pale, senseless, and, as he supposed, dead, at the door to which she had been tied, a deep, convulsive shudder of awful agony shook every fibre of his wounded frame ; and, pausing to ascertain whether any trace of life yet remained, his eye fell upon the plain gold ring he had given her but a few months previous as a token of his affection. He had barely time to draw it from her finger when the hurried tread of approaching footsteps warned him to seek safety by instant flight. Casting one hasty but fond glance at the dear form of her whom he never expected

to behold again in this world, he rushed out. As he did so he saw the friendly Indian, Wenane, approaching the house, who, by a quick gesture, indicated to him the path he must take ; and he had run but a few rods in the direction pointed out when he saw a number of men by the fence in front of him, and his old friend Squire Langdell standing upon it, looking in the direction of the garrison. Gladly did they meet ; but sorrowfully did the squire listen to his sad though incoherent recital of the bloody drama in which he had borne so prominent a part. The squire and his companions had escaped from the other garrisons in the deadly fight, and, supposing all to have been killed or taken captive in the other garrison, had paused here for a moment to ascertain if they could discover any one of their companions who possibly might yet survive.

They then pursued their way to the adjacent settlements to rally a company for the pursuit of the enemy and recovery of the captives. The next day that cool and determined spirit, Robert Vaughan, returned from Little Harbor, whither he had been on business at the time of this horrid tragedy, and, collecting a few men, buried the dead and attended to the wants of the few who had been left as such ; which being accomplished, the cry was rung through the surrounding country, "To arms, for pursuit and revenge !" They now ascertained that the settlements in nearly every town in the colonies had been attacked at nearly the same time with the garrisons at Cocheco ; therefore they applied to Massachusetts for assistance. But they found that colony overwhelmed with witchcraft, supposed satanic possessions, and infernal manifestations of all sorts ; and moreover, beset with feuds, contentions and dissensions concerning old and new charters, Arminianism, Antinomianism, and numerous other matters of less

importance, to such an extent that they were utterly unable to render them any assistance. They therefore raised a force from the minute men of the colonies adjoining their own, and, marching to the east, joined Captain Harmon and Major Moulton's expedition, which had been formed in that quarter for the Indian war.

CHAPTER V.

ELSIE TUFTON'S INSANITY. — ROZELLA AT NORRIDGEWOCK AND THE CATHOLIC CHAPEL. — LITTLE OWEGA AND THE PROFILE LEAF. — ROZELLA'S INCARCERATION IN A SUBTERRANEAN CELL.

AFTER Elsie Tufton had entered the garrison with the scalp of Charles Cutts, still reeking in the warm blood of one she loved better than the crimson drops that coursed through her own veins, most pitiful indeed were her mournful wailings and distressed moans. She would look at the scalp for an instant, and then, with all the fond and endearing epithets that affection and tenderness could suggest, again press it to her heart and lips. Her face was of a ghastly paleness, and her eyes dry and tearless, and with a fixed stare, and frightfully wild and glassy.

"Look, Charles!" cried she, as she unrolled the pink papers from the beautifully curled locks; and an unnatural, startling laugh broke from her lips and rang through the garrison. "Here are fish in your hair; a fine net this to catch fish! Ha! ha! I told you that you would frighten them out of the water; and here they are, in your hair. Here, take this tress I tear from my own dishevelled locks; it will serve to mend your net. Charles is not dead; but what means this? Ha! ha! your head is full of them; and bleeding, too! See that drop! pink fish and red blood. O, the drops are golden ones; and I'll bathe my burning brow in them. 'Tis redhot; and the drops hiss and fly

away in vapor as I apply them. O, my brain is on fire, and my eyes seem bursting from their sockets. I shall go mad — ah, no, not mad! I'd laugh like the gay troop at Merry Meeting to see the heir to the crown of next May day go mad! Ha! ha! Charles, you'll put the flowery crown on my head as gracefully as I did on 'Zella's. I wish 'twere there now, for a hoop, to keep it from bursting asunder. But I will put on this golden-haired fish net, and Charles will think he has caught a mermaid. Ha! ha! that will be playing a good joke, to tease a lady's sweet-heart so. Hush! they are coming! Ah, no; 'tis but the breeze sighing its low tales through the moaning pines. I wish it would cool my own brow and quench its pent-up fires. Look, look, Charles! I see a maiden fair; she has caught the knife; and see! she strikes the handsome cross where French and Indian blood have mingled, and Nature exhausts her art to rear a splendid structure around a heart so vile as to better befit some foul and slimy cavern where loathsome vipers feed. And see — O, in mercy see — what wild, fantastic pictures are dimly visible in the dark recesses of his treacherous heart! Now they stand out plainer. Back, back, ye fiends! Approach me not. Look! there is one with eyelid dropped and glued upon his scarred cheek. He's Janus-faced; and, horror! another, who by those glaring eyes, green with hate and glaring with hellish malice, must be Taurus. And now the chief figure appears in the background, and seems to smile with the fiendish grin of satanic exultation upon her devilish coadjutors. Can it be? Yes, 'tis that infernal hag, Dolly Plot. O Heavens! I see it all; 'tis plain as noonday sun at summer solstice. This cowardly trio set the war dogs on to hunt and capture the fair Queen of the Forest, and murder Waldron at her very feet, when to the battle's reeking front they ne'er a step dare take. Enough, enough!" And as she pronounced the closing word of

this mournful rhapsody poor Elsie Tufton fell senseless to the floor; a raging fever seized her burning brain; and, with occasional lucid intervals, she vacillated for weeks, like the swinging pendulum, 'twixt life and death. Upon this painful bed of torture we must for the present leave her, promising our readers to pursue her history at another time more to their satisfaction than we could now do.

In an Indian village called Norridgewock, upon a river of the same name, the latter of which is now called Kennebec, stood, at the period of which we are now writing, a little Catholic church, the plan and architectural style of which were modelled after the French churches of the same religious order. Its doors and windows were in the old Gothic style; and its little tower, from which rose a light spire, surmounted by a snow-white cross, contained a bell which had been transported from Canada, through the wild and dreary wilderness, upon the backs of Indians. The pictures, images, and general arrangement of the interior were nearly the same as prevail at the present day, and by which the Catholic churches are adorned.

A dark, gloomy cell, in the basement, was hung around with paintings representing the tortures of the damned; and grotesque images of frightful and repulsive forms of fiends, devils, fiery serpents, every where met the eye, interspersed with human skulls and mouldy crossbones; while upon a platform at one end of the apartment were thumbscrews, iron collars, and various other instruments of torture.

In front of the church was erected another cross, sunk deep into the earth, to enable it to resist the violence of the winds. Over the door of the church were ringheaded staples, firmly driven into the solid woodwork, through which passed a flagstaff, with a banner attached, on which

was painted the cross, together with the bow and arrow of the Indian, as a symbolic declaration that the murders of the Indians and the religion of the priest had struck hands and made common cause. And at morning mass and evening prayer the "banner with this strange device" had a charm far more potent than the stroke of the bell to call the Indian warrior from the yet palpitating heart of his slain victim without to the cunning heart to which themselves were made victims within.

It was a bland and golden Sabbath morning in autumn, and the variegated forest, as it seemed, in order to appear to the best advantage and exhibit itself in keeping with the picturesque costume of the red worshippers,—who were standing listlessly about the church or sauntering idly among the wigwams of the lodge,—had put on its "Sunday suit" and arrayed itself in "goodly apparel."

Just after the early morning mass was finished, at an unusual hour and for an unusual occasion, the bell upon the chapel suddenly struck twice. The Indians at once assumed a solemn demeanor, bent the knee, and at the first stroke of the bell made a motion across, and at the second stroke a motion down, the breast, so as to leave upon it an imaginary cross; after which the solemnity vanished from their faces and their features resumed their usual expression.

Almost the very moment the bell struck, a young woman of superior air and high bearing was seen to emerge from the lodge of Bomazeen, and, with himself on one side and another Indian warrior on the other, proceed towards the church. Before and behind her, as they moved along, walked two fancifully decorated squaws, who carried each a lighted candle; while Bomazeen and his companion bore each a miniature cross. The young lady had exceedingly black and brilliant eyes; but her features were of marble paleness, and much agitated. Her hair, also, was

of the deepest black, and hung low on her polished neck in natural curls, though undressed and disarranged. As she passed along, a beautifully variegated leaf of red, green, and yellow, the effect of the autumn frost, fell from a stately old maple by their path upon her bosom. As she took it in her hand her eye caught a fanciful figure upon the leaf which bore a close resemblance to the human form, particularly as to the features; and, struck by the likeness, she retained it. As they approached the church she noticed a brighteyed, and, as she thought, extremely beautiful, little Indian girl, of some ten or twelve summers, standing upon the steps before the door, regarding her with great earnestness. With a sweet though sad smile she presented the curious leaf to the little squaw, who seized it eagerly, and, throwing her arms around her, clung to her closely, and piteously entreated her grim escort not to harm the White Pigeon.

On entering the church, the tall candles were burning, and the incense rising in wavy rings into the air, and the priest kneeling, crossing himself, and muttering before the altar. So absorbed did he seem in his devotions that apparently he did not notice her entrance. He wore upon his head a small bowl-shaped cap, and was dressed in a long gown, with silver lacings and trimmings for the border, which trailed upon the ground.

He wore the long badge, or pontifical cross, on his back, passing over the shoulders. He finally finished his solemn mummeries, and turned himself slowly around towards her, as though he supposed his august presence would impress the young woman with such pious awe that she would immediately prostrate herself before him. But to his evident disappointment he saw that she stood as erect as himself, and regarded him with the most perfect composure.

"Your name and residence, young woman," demanded the priest, sternly.

"Rozella Langdell, of Laconia, sir," replied Rozella ; for she indeed it was.

"Sir !" repeated the priest, in a severe tone of voice. "That title was once prefixed to the office of a priest, as well as to knights and baronets ; but latterly the English have, by its vulgar and familiar use, made the term obsolete as applied to the holy order ; and you will, therefore, for the future, address your priest by the more appropriate and endearing appellations of 'most holy father,' 'his holy reverence,' or, 'the good Father Ralle.'"

"Truly," replied Rozella, "I but partially understand you, so imperfect is your pronunciation and accent."

"Such may be the case," said the priest, speaking more slowly ; "for my knowledge of the English tongue is but limited. I was born and educated in France ; and although I have been an evangelist in the wilds of America for more than thirty years, I have had but little intercourse with any people save the French and Indians. I returned but yesterday from Canada ; therefore my daughter will not think me too inquisitive when I inquire how long she has been with my people."

"Three weeks," answered Rozella.

"And have my children provided suitably for your comfort and convenience ?" inquired the priest.

"For neither," replied she.

"Have you not fared as comfortably as themselves ?" pursued the priest.

"I have fared as uncomfortably, I suppose," said she, emphatically.

"Your personal rights and privileges have not been infringed upon or outraged ?" inquired Ralle.

"No further," replied Rozella, "than my being confined

as a prisoner, and compelled to make moccasins, wampum, and baskets, sir."

"Sir!" repeated the priest, impatiently. "Have you so soon forgotten my proper title? But," said he, assuming a more solemn demeanor, "my daughter's spiritual welfare must be no longer neglected; you will therefore now proceed to make confession of your sins, and, after appropriate penance, receive absolution for past offences; and by fastings, scourgings of the body, and the zealous performance of works of supererogation, commend yourself to the approbation of the most holy Catholic church. So here," said he, pointing to a cushioned stool at his side, "you will now kneel and make confession of your most secret sins, whether of deed or thought."

"I have done so already, and more, even before I left the lodge," said Rozella, in reply.

"More! And what more did you do?" said the priest.

"I prayed," was her reply, "that I might be delivered from this foul den of bloodthirsty wild beasts ere the dark night should again settle upon the earth."

"Ha!" ejaculated the priest, derisively and in a low voice, "it will be a long time, I apprehend, before your prayer will be answered. But," added he, in a louder tone, "you are to confess to your spiritual and holy father the priest; so kneel immediately, and make confession to me of the inmost secrets of your heart."

Rozella, being fatigued with standing so long, seated herself upon the low stool, saying, as she did so, "One only has power to forgive sins."

"Right, my good child," said the priest, misinterpreting her meaning, and thinking he had prevailed; at the same time drawing his chair directly in front of her, and bending down until his face nearly touched her own. "Now proceed in your confession; and if you shall stand ap-

proved as a true daughter of the holy Mother Church, you shall not only receive absolution, but be removed this very night from the filthy lodge of Bomazeen, and housed and treated like a very queen."

"I was such last night," said Rozella.

"How so?" said the priest; "of what were you queen last night?"

"Of the brave old forest," said Rozella.

"How now?" said the priest, in a sharp tone of voice; "do you presume to trifle with your holy and spiritual father? Come," cried he, stamping his foot upon the floor, "confess at once, and tell me all you have to reveal."

"I have done so already," said Rozella, quietly.

"Begin," demanded the priest, sternly, "and make immediate confession, or I will put you to the torture."

"You have done that already," was her reply.

"I shall wait no longer," said the priest, impatiently; "for you are to confess, do penance, receive absolution, and, ere the sun goes down, become the wife of the brave Mogg Hegon."

"Never! never!" almost shrieked Rozella, involuntarily throwing up her hands as she did so, and thereby displacing the little shawl from her white shoulders; "Heaven will never allow it. I would sooner sleep in death than become the wife of Mogg Hegon. That indeed would be an outrage, I must confess."

"Right, right," responded the priest, again failing to understand or follow her rapid utterance, and catching at her last phrase; "confess, and let me know the darkest passion of your heart first," at the same time laying his hand familiarly upon her bare shoulder.

As quick as thought she struck off his hand, and, looking him steadily in the eye, replied, "You are a wolf in

sheep's clothing ; and if you would see the blackest passion first, look into your own foul, and polluted heart, and you will find it there reflected."

As she paused, big drops of perspiration suddenly shot from the priest's brow, and, starting up, he walked rapidly to and fro before Rozella with compressed lips and flashing eyes, occasionally darting upon her the most fiery glances, as if to cause her to quail before their fury.

"Yes," hissed the priest, turning abruptly to her and wiping the beaded perspiration from his brow, "that stubborn heart must be thoroughly subdued, cleansed, and washed ; and whom shall I call to assist in the work ? "

"Your holiness," replied Rozella, with emphasis, "would probably prefer the Indian laundress."

"How is this ? " exclaimed the priest, quailing beneath her piercing gaze. "How know you aught of her ? "

"I saw Weseme, your son, the handsome crossblood," replied she, with a meaning look, "when he fell with the keen knife quivering in his murderous heart."

"Ah, mon Dieu," said the priest, aside, "is she a spirit with whom I am conversing, who knows all the secrets of my life, and thus causes my darkest sins to rise before me ? She seems very like one. But," inquired he, rousing himself from his momentary trance, "by whose hand did Weseme fall ? "

"Go ask Bomazeen," replied she, "of the piercing shriek that came from the clouds when the great Bashaba was murdered, and Squando of the glaring eyes that danced along the bog when he buried the palefaced dogs."

The priest now turned paler than ever, and sat down, as if faint. Presently, however, he arose, poured some water, a draught or two of which seemed to revive him somewhat ; and she heard him muttering in a low voice a

few sentences, the last of which she was only able to hear distinctly ; which was, "whether she be a spirit or not I can hardly tell, and I must have counsel."

He then went to the door of the church, unlocked and opened it, when presently a large, muscular savage entered, with whom the priest held a whispered consultation in the porch. As the priest concluded his low inquiries the Indian replied aloud, "She is no spirit ; I know her well, and who was her English father."

The Indian had on a gay blanket, and his most beautiful wampum, with beads, silver bracelets, and ruffles about his legs ; all which constituted a dress worn only on his wedding days. He came directly in front of Rozella, and, addressing himself to her, said, "The young squaw of the palefaces should think it a great honor that she has found favor in the sight of the mighty sagamore of Norridgewock, Mogg Hekon ; for he it is who now stands before her."

"I had supposed as much," replied Rozella, with an air and tone of indifference.

"But you must not trifle with the great chief," replied Mogg, haughtily. "Will you this very hour confess to the holy Father Ralle, and marry Mogg Hekon?"

"Neither," firmly replied Rozella ; "I equally detest his holy mummery and your loathsome presence."

"Enough," said Mogg, scowling upon her with an expression of infernal malice ; and, advancing quickly to the door, he flung it wide open, when twenty painted savages at once rushed in.

"Take her," cried the priest, pointing to Rozella, "and drag her to the cell of penance below, and give her for company the mouldering bones of those once stubborn like herself, and around her limbs lock the iron chain to which the heavy stone is attached ; and

when she will confess and marry the great sagamore she may come up to the light again, but never until then."

The Indians dragged her down to the dismal cell as they were commanded, and, having fettered her securely, left her alone with the grinning skulls, frightful images and paintings, and instruments of torture.

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CHAPTER VI.

INCIDENT ON THE ROUTE TO NORRIDGEWOCK. — SEBAGO LAKE, AND
FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE AURORA BOREALIS ON THE WESTERN CON-
TINENT.

SHORT, yet sufficiently long, in the interval between her capture at the garrisons and the events recorded in our last chapter, had been Rozella's experience of Indian character and customs to enable her to satisfy herself of their utter want of any principle founded upon generous impulses or unselfish motives. True, they would spare the life of one who had assisted or befriended them; but they had no inward motive power which would prompt them to extend mercy to an enemy or friendship to one who had not previously done them a favor. She had also learned that, notwithstanding their cruel and revengeful natures, they were cowards at heart, and were also credulous and easily wrought upon by the mysterious and marvellous. Of this fact one of the earliest proofs was exhibited in their general agreement that Elsie, as she rushed out from the garrison and slew the handsome crossblood, was a spirit or supernatural being; and she had also observed that, while on their way through the forests, they were always upon the alert, and that every dry twig that snapped under the foot of some unseen animal was the clink of an enemy's gun, while every strange noise, like that of a tree chafing against its fellow, was the war cry of an ambushed foe.

At the time Elsie performed the daring achievement of slaying the crossblood and bearing off the scalp of Charles Cutts, we left Rozella, as the reader will doubtless remember, tied between two Indians. The whole party who witnessed this bold and heroic deed were so fearful of the anger of the spirits, of whom they supposed Elsie to be the forerunner, that they made the necessary arrangements and moved away from the haunted spot as soon as possible.

The place to which they were destined was far away upon the Kennebec. The Indians paid greater deference to Rozella than to the other captives, as they supposed she was to be the wife of their great chief, Mogg Hegan. The other prisoners received more abuse and suffered more hardships than herself, being compelled to carry the provisions, together with such other articles of plunder as they had taken from the garrisons.

Weary and faint, they marched on through the unbroken wilderness until nearly noon, when they arrived at a little spring and halted for breakfast. They had among the provisions taken from the garrisons some meat already boiled, which served as the first meal of the captives; and as most of the Indians preferred raw flesh, breakfast was soon finished, and they moved on in silence, the Indians continually looking on all sides of them, or peering suspiciously at every prostrate tree or large rock behind which a lurking foe might lie concealed. Thus they pursued their way until about the middle of the afternoon, when Mrs. Lee, to whose back was tied half a bushel of corn meal, sank beneath her burden and fell exhausted to the ground. The Indian to whom she had been assigned as his prize gave her a cruel thrust in the side with his gun, which brought her to her feet; and she was again staggering on under her load when Rozella, whose tender heart could no longer endure the sight of her friend's

sufferings, sprang forward, and, catching her in her arms, entreated the Indian to allow her to carry the burden. To this he consented; but while he was binding the load upon her Bomazeen came up, and commanded the savage to carry the bag himself, for that he would disgrace the great sachem, Mogg Hegon, by making a beast of burden of the handsome young palefaced squaw they were carrying him for a present and wife.

When they reached Sebago Lake, upon whose delightful shores they encamped for the night, the captives as well as the Indians were extremely fatigued, and threw themselves upon the ground seemingly in utter exhaustion. But the claims of hunger soon aroused them; and in a brief space the camp fires were blazing up, and the meat for the captives was smoking, as the Indians rolled it in the hot embers and ashes and went through a sort of burlesque of cookery. But it was scarcely warmed through before it was laid, with its double coating of ashes and dirt, before the captives. Rozella was unable to swallow but a mouthful of the meat, but partook sparingly of a little bread, and water from the lake. After the meal was finished the older Indians spread their blankets for themselves and Rozella, together with some other of the women, while the younger portion of the company were yet amusing themselves upon the shores of the lake. They now counted their captives, and found the whole number, old and young, to be twenty, of which five were females. These were tied with cords and withs, the ends of which were attached to their own wrists, so as to prevent escape by night. Rozella was secured by a rope passing around her waist, one end of which was attached to the wrist of Bomazeen on one side, and the opposite extremity to that of an Indian on the other.

They had just lain down upon the blankets when the younger Indians came running in a body from the lake, so

agitated that their teeth chattered and their knees knocked together from fear.

"Look!" cried they, pointing to the north; "the world is all on fire, and the blaze is running up the sky."

The older savages arose, and were no less surprised and struck with awe and fear than their younger companions. Fiery clouds from the northern sky flashed upwards into the heavens, their scarlet hues dazzling the eye as they assumed strange and fantastic forms of mounted warriors, who wheeled in dense columns and rode with the fury of armed men over the red battle ground of the sky. Anon they took the shape of enormous banners, upon whose waving folds seemed painted gigantic combatants of the olden time, who with glittering spears and flaming lances met and closed in bloody encounter; and then would appear stately temples, towering far above the reach of mortal sight, which would stand in all the awful grandeur of their majestic proportions and wrapped in monstrous sheets of fire for a moment, and then totter and fall a shapeless mass of utter ruin. To the terror-struck savage, as he left his captive unloosed and free by the shore of Sebago and ran and hid himself, it appeared an impending judgment ominous of sudden and utter destruction. The rolling flames still swept on, and leaped and crackled as they rose, even to the very vault of heaven. The whole atmosphere was filled with shooting stars and fiery meteors; and the clouds seemed like revolving wheels of fire, from whose periphery shot stars of all grades of size and every shade of color. The lake, like a polished plate of fire, reflected in its broad mirror the whole unwonted scene; and the fishes, as they leaped from their native elements, as if to ascertain the cause of the strange spectacle above them, seemed metamorphosed into the golden-hued denizens of tropical waters. Every leaf of the forest returned ray for ray; but the Crystal Hills

behind and towering above the forest for one ray gave back a thousand, until the red rolling clouds and vapor upon their summits made them appear like glowing volcanoes belching forth immense volumes of fire and smoke. The smaller birds fluttered helplessly to and fro, uttering piteous cries, while the wild scream of the hawk, the hoarse croak of the crow, and the dismal hoot of the owl resounded on every side. The wild beasts issued from the clefts and dens in the mountain side, huddled together in silent terror. The bear, the wolf, and the wildcat were not only at peace one with another, but, like lambs of the same fold, crouched down together in the same hiding-place in one harmonious group. The same prey for whose blood the famished bear but an hour before had been thirsting now nestled close by his side, and was licked as his own cub.

The heart of Rozella swelled with awe as she gazed at the awful grandeur of the blazing heavens, and sank again within her heaving bosom, as she listened to the din and discord of earth's Babel-like confusion. She cast her eyes about her for her companions in bonds as well as for her captors ; but neither were to be seen.

She was "alone with her glory," amid the glory of the heavens and the terror of earth. Whither to fly she knew not. If she made her bed in the lovely Sebago, Death was there ; and if she flew to the uttermost parts of the forest, she but rushed to his cold arms ; for his hoarse cry burst from the mouths of a hundred wolves, who, as this strange phantasmagoria faded from the sky and Darkness had resumed her reign, had again commenced their savage howlings. As she stood gazing into the depths of the dark old forest she heard the pattering of feet behind her, and, casting her eyes in that direction, saw a dark line approaching her with lightning-like rapidity ; and in a moment she saw the glaring eyes of twenty ferocious

wolves, who were dashing directly towards her. She bounded into the forest, while the wolves passed on to the lake and kept on their rapid course around its circling border. But as she had now broken the spell which hitherto had held her feet fast to the earth as to a magnet, and hoping to discover some of her friends, she still advanced, when, behind the first large rock in her way, she came upon an Indian and a monstrous bear snuggled together in brotherly union, both apparently equally paralyzed by the electric phenomena of the heavens. "O," said Rozella to herself, "I would that I had a good road before me, and Flying Cloud alive again! I now for the first time realize the full force of Richard III.'s famous expression, 'A horse! a horse! My kingdom for a horse!' How swiftly, were he now here, would my Flying Cloud bear the rider to whom he seemed so devotedly attached from the pursuit of every savage foe safe to the Elysian fields of liberty! O liberty! sweet, sweet liberty!" As she uttered aloud the last words, she turned quickly to take an opposite course, and ran directly into the grasp of that Old Bloody Bones, Bomazeen, who, throwing his powerful arms around her, replied, "Yes, young squaw got liberty to go back with big chief to her blanket."

The clouds had now resumed nearly their natural appearance; and thus ended the first exhibition of the aurora borealis ever seen in New England.

CHAPTER VII.

ROZELLA IN THE LODGE OF BOMAZEEN.—SHE OFFERS TO TEACH THE YOUNG INDIANS TO READ IN PREFERENCE TO MAKING BASKETS AND WAMPUM.—HER SCHEME TO PREJUDICE THE INDIANS WITH THE FISH.

WHEN quiet was again restored, and “order fair prevailed,” the scattered Indians slowly and cautiously returned to their camp fires, whose smouldering brands were fitfully tossing their gleaming flashes far out upon the sleeping bosom of the beautiful Sebago ; and the wild beasts also skulked back to their dens and coverts, giving occasionally a sneaking look behind them, as if ashamed that any should have witnessed their late terror and affright.

It was past midnight ere Rozella slept, and at daybreak she was awakened by the jerk of Bomazeen’s rope around her waist. She arose, and, casting her eyes about her, ascertained that herself and Mrs. Lee — who, being wounded, had been unable to make her escape — were the only persons of the twenty who had been recaptured. Bomazeen and five other Indians were left to guard the two women ; but so frightened did they still appear that they seemed more helpless than their captives. The remainder went in pursuit of the other captives ; but so discouraged and dejected had they become since the fearful scenes they had so lately witnessed, and which they considered as ominous of dire disasters, that, abandoning further

pursuit, they lounged about the woods for a few days, and then slowly went on their course towards Norridgewock. Bomazeen, with his two captives and squad of men, took a hasty breakfast of their half-cooked provisions, and, with such remaining portions as they could conveniently carry, took up their line of march for Norridgewock.

The Indians conducted themselves more humanely during the remainder of the route, for they were still prodigiously frightened; and nothing further worthy of note occurred until their arrival at the above-named place.

For several days succeeding their arrival the Indians who had gone in pursuit of the other captives returned in scattered detachments, with the woful stamp of terror and dismay still lingering upon their faces. Not another one of the English had they retaken, most of whom reached the settlements in safety, one or two only perishing in the woods or being devoured by wild beasts.

Rozella was taken to the lodge of Bomazeen, as her recital to the priest has already shown. Mogg Hekon had obtained a sight of her through the crevices of the lodge, and was so smitten by her charms that he fain would have made her his own at once; but as the good Father Ralle was absent, he was obliged — according to the custom the priest had established — to forego that pleasure until the holy father should return and give her to him through the formal ceremonies of marriage.

She was now set at work to embroider wampum, and with the white quills of the hedgehog to ornament the buckskin moccasins, together with a variety of other bead-work. They had also compelled her to try her hand at basketmaking, and also in coloring with extracts of the barks and berries of the forest the twigs of the willow, the blades of rushes, and the laminated layers of the ash.

But Rozella was not long in arriving at the conclusion that the profession of basketmaking, though highly useful,

was not exactly in accordance with the genius and tastes of a young lady who had been educated in the classical schools of England ; therefore she informed one of Bomazeen's squaws, to whose charge she had been committed for initiation in all the handicraft and mysteries of the art, that her hands were unused to being torn by the rough splinters and filaments of the ash, and that she would perform no more of the slavish work.

To this communication, which was made more by signs than by words, the squaw replied, "that she would be made to work, whether willing or not ; for Bomazeen compelled all his squaws to labor. And besides, the great chief, Mogg Hegon, wished to know how much wampum and basket his new squaw could make, as he valued them more for the amount of work they could do than for their handsome looks or good qualities otherwise."

"Well," replied Rozella, "I have no wish to be highly valued by Mogg Hegon or any other redskin, and am, therefore, more than ever resolved to do no more labor than will serve to protect me from personal abuse ; but I will instruct your children to read, if you will allow me to first teach them to speak English."

"No," replied the squaw, indignantly ; "the tongues of our papposes must not be poisoned by taking paleface talk in their mouth."

"Then," said Rozella, "I will work upon the wampum and moccason, but not extract colors or make baskets."

At this juncture some of the Indians returned from a hunting excursion with game and fish ; and the squaws having informed Bomazeen that the young paleface refused to work upon the baskets, Old Bloody Bones thereupon walked into the wigwam, and, throwing down a large fish before Rozella, said, gruffly, and with an extra ugh, —

"White squaw no work basket? Ugh! she do this, then."

As she looked at the fish lying in the sun, whose rays shone in through a little window of the gloomy old lodge, its scales reflected a reddish hue, and she instantly be-thought her of a scheme by which to prejudice the minds of the Indians and enable her to escape the dirty task of dressing the fish. She suddenly started back, at the same time looking suspiciously at the fish and mysteriously at Bomazeen, and asked, —

“Did the fish in the Norridgewock also turn red on the night of the dreadful fire in the heavens at Sebago?”

The ruse was successful. The whole camp was in a terrible panic, and the fish was flung out of the lodge in hot haste and left to rot in the dirt.

From the time of this incident until the arrival of Ralle the Indians regarded her with great awe, and she was not compelled to do their work. She was still closely confined, however, and not even allowed to see her fellow-captive, Mrs. Lee, who was confined in another wigwam. Mrs. Lee had suffered so much from the fatigue of her journey and the tasks and abuse of the savage whose prize she was, to all of which was added the excruciating anguish she had experienced on being compelled to witness the cruel death of her father, Major Richard Waldron, as well as that of her husband, that exhausted nature at last gave way, and she was seized by a raging fever, which came near terminating her existence.

But she finally slowly recovered from her dreadful sufferings, during the whole of which she was not allowed to even see the face of the kindhearted and sympathizing Rozella.

CHAPTER VIII.

SCENE AT DOLLY PLOT'S HUT ON THE ISLAND. — DOLLY TELLS TAURUS'S FORTUNE FOR THE FIRST TIME. — DOLLY IN HER WITCH CHARACTER, AND FRIGHT OF HER COMPANIONS.

"THE winds forebode no luck to-night," sorrowfully sighed an oddly-dressed, middle-aged female, as she sat alone in an old hut, around whose dilapidated walls the northern blasts whistled drearily. "Yes, I see them in the waving glow of the coals; two of them are coming. Ah, I wonder if they have money. If they have, let a dozen of them come. But still I see angry passions leap forth, as the glowing coal bursts and the gas hisses and bubbles up from the hot embers. Well, I will wait their approach as patiently as I can," said she, taking her knitting work and plying the needles fast and nervously.

While she thus waits we will take a closer view of herself and her little domicile. Her general appearance seems quite respectable. The oddest feature of her face is her nose, which turns up so as to leave a line drawn from the eyes over its ridge to the end thereof, nearly a quarter of an inch shorter than the line from the eyes to its base, thereby forming an obtuse angle with the lip, when the mouth is closed, (which is seldom the case,) of about sixty-seven and a half degrees. In the outset, then, her nose is not in her favor, for it is decidedly "puggish," and, moreover, contradicts Lavater's theory of physiognomy *in toto*

by its evident tendency to easily take a *snuff*. Half of her upper teeth were gone, — that is, all on one side, — which, as her mouth was generally open, caused the remainder to look longer than they otherwise would have done.

She was dressed in a long, striped gown, which dragged upon the floor, with a chocolate-colored ribbon tied around where her waist should have been ; for her form throughout was “pretty much of a muchness ;” and when she moved she rolled along like a stuffed sack on castors.

Her hair was generally rolled up in rings, then turned over upon the roots and fastened with a tooth from a broken comb or a thorn from the hedge. She wore two caps — one fitting close to her head like a bladder, (which, indeed, it may have been,) and the other of lace, which might once have been white, with a narrow frill for a border in front, and a crown that ran up a foot from her head, which gave her a blended comical and mysterious appearance.

The house was of logs hewn square, one story in height, with three small windows, and the chimney made of round sticks thickly plastered over with clay and mortar. Within the walls were three rooms ; the first of which, as you passed in, served as an entry and woodshed : then came the kitchen, dining room, parlor, and her own sleeping room, all in one ; and last in order was a bed room kept for visitors, around the walls of which hung her own clothing, her best bonnet, and a silver-gray cloak, upon the shoulders of which was a long, peaked hood, standing, or rather running, into the air about two feet, and terminating in a sharp cone, like the horn of an anvil.

The chairs were of the straight, round-posted fashion, with a bottom of the peeled strands of the ash, and with backs rising about two inches above the head of the occupant.

In one corner of the hearth sat an enormous black cat,

in whose breast was a white star, which was named Tab ; and in the other crouched a dog, of a dingy-red color, which ordinarily went by the name of Pan, though on Sundays he was dignified by the name of Panther.

Upon the evening of which we have spoken a dim fire was flashing up from the nearly consumed brands and flinging the long shadows of the highbacked chairs upon the opposite wall of the room. The cricket in the hearth, the brands burning at one end and frying and whistling at the other, and Tab purring in the chimney corner, all seemed, like a full band, to be playing the same tune ; while the rat-tat-tat of the old lady's knitting needles rattled in the "reveille" of her expected guests ; but still they came not. The long shadow of the tongs upon the ceiling balanced up to the modest shovel opposite, who in turn *chasséed* across to the ghostly shadows of the highbacked chairs ; and they, too, joining in the wild revel, the whole phantom crew "in mystic dance began to move," when, in the midst of the "grand promenade," the flame from the brands suddenly expired, and they instantly vanished and were lost in darkness and vacuity.

The winds howled mournfully around the dwelling ; the waters of the river chafed angrily their rocky banks ; and all without and all within seemed ghost-like and unreal.

But now a loud and sudden rap upon the door was heard.

"Come in," said the woman ; but the protest of Pan was much louder than her invitation, as he barked furiously and bounded towards the door ; while Tab flew up the chimney, in his flight overturning the tongs, which in their turn upset the shovel, both raising in their fall an awful din, and making "confusion worse confounded."

The door now opened and two men entered. The first had on a shadbellied coat, which might once have been worn by a Quaker, while upon his head was a foxskin cap.

The second wore a striped frock, falling to his knees, and a narrow-rimmed, funnel-shaped hat. Upon his left cheek was a large scar; and the lower eyelid on the same side was glued to the cheek and looked inflamed and watery.

The mistress of the hut bowed civilly, and, addressing the foremost, said, —

“Good evening, Mr. Taurus.”

“Good evening, Miss Plot,” returned he.

“Good evening, Mr. Janus,” continued the woman, addressing the other.

“Good evening, aunt Dolly,” replied Janus.

“A gloomy night without,” observed Taurus.

“Very,” replied Dolly; “but I am glad to see you;” at the same time adding in a low tone, as she turned for one of the high chairs, “if I get a dab at the money.”

“What’s that you’re saying?” asked Taurus.

“I said,” replied Dolly, “I must get Tab the honey.”

“Cats don’t eat honey,” said Janus.

“Tab will eat any thing at my commands,” she answered. “You have frightened him away,” continued she, “for I can see him nowhere.”

“I thought,” said Taurus, turning to Janus, “that she said if she could get a dab at the money.”

“I don’t wonder you should think so,” replied Dolly; “for it is high time it was paid. You promised that if I would lay a plot for the destruction of the Waldrons, so that you could thereby get the Forest Queen, you would immediately give me five crowns.”

“So I did,” answered Taurus; “but Britton is still living.”

“Yes,” sneered Dolly; “and Taurus is still a coward. I told you, if you would bring me the strange Indians, I would assign each of you a part which, if well played, would destroy the whole of the Waldrons and bring away

the precious jewel. But instead of taking your posts at the door of Waldron's garrison, as I directed, and thereby preventing the escape of a single one, you stood trembling in the edge of the adjacent forest, like arrant cowards as ye are. The scheme I laid would have worked well, had ye only been of the right material to have carried it through."

"I think," observed Janus in a low tone to Taurus, "the least said about that part of the matter the better. You had better pay up. Tell her you will pay her as soon as you can get the money."

"Well, well," said Taurus to Dolly, "I haven't enough to pay you to-night; but you may depend on my paying the five crowns. So let it rest for the present."

"But it shall not rest long," replied Dolly. "And why did you bring me no company?" she continued. "Do you mean to starve me out altogether?"

"No, no," answered Taurus; "but we have seen no strangers on the road; and we called at the Buck's Horn Inn below, and there were none there."

"I suspect," said Janus, "that these bloody Indian fights have frightened away all the new settlers; and as it is getting late in the season, we shall not have many more come in to take up the land until spring opens."

"But, aunt Dolly," said Taurus, "you have never told my fortune yet, notwithstanding our long acquaintance and the crowds of customers I have brought you."

"Very well," replied Dolly, "I will do so now."

Trundling along to a little table, and trundling that into the middle of the floor, she drew out a drawer, from which she took a pack of cards; and the precious trio seated themselves around it.

"I am not in very good spirits to-night," said Dolly, "from my disappointment."

"Well," replied Taurus, drawing a wooden canteen from

his pocket, and, with a broad grin, shaking it at her ear, "d'ye hear it chipper? There, take a good swig of that. 'Twill put you in spirits if you first put the spirits in yourself."

Dolly poured out a cupful ; and as she was raising it to her lips, Janus inquired why she did not sweeten it.

"It is sweet enough as it is," replied Dolly, as she tossed off the whole at a draught. Taurus and Janus each followed suit, and were then ready to proceed to business.

"There," said Dolly, as she shuffled the pack ; "now wish."

Taurus cut the cards as she held them in her hand, and laid them upon the table. Dolly, proceeding in the approved method, now took the half which had been cut, and turning them over, exclaimed, "O, bad luck, to start with. You not only lose your wish, but, see! here is the Jack of Spades heels up. Here you are standing on your head." She then spread out the cards, and added, "The Queen of Hearts, with the Six of Spades upon her face, and the Ace of Clubs with diamonds looking upon it. That signifies that you wished about a light-complected lady, with black hair and eyes ; and the diamonds show that the eyes are very brilliant."

"Same one, egad," said Taurus.

"I believe she does know something," said Janus.

"O, trouble, trouble!" cried Dolly. "Here you are again, Taurus," showing the Jack of Clubs heels up, "with two men of power and one of attraction between yourself and the lady of whom you wished, standing on your head. The first, the King of Spades, with two Fours of Diamonds, and hearts upon his hand ; and the Six of Hearts crossing the Six of Spades, one before and the other behind him. This shows him to be a man of power and learning, as the two Fours indicate a book. The two

Sixes crossed in front and rear signify that he wears a cross."

"That's the old priest down there," said Taurus.

"I thought as much," replied Dolly. "The other is the King of Diamonds," she continued, "and signifies an obstinate man, of fiery temper and revengeful disposition. Next to him is another, inferior king, and men and women of lesser note. This shows him to be a man of authority, with a subordinate king and his subjects all under his feet. The other person who stands between you and your wish is not a king, and it does not appear what he will become. The rest is all confusion. This is what relates to the past. Now wish again as I shuffle the cards."

"Ready — all ready," said Jack, as she shuffled.

"Well, then, cut," said Dolly.

Taurus was now afraid that, if he cut deep, he should come in contact with the gentleman in boots; so he only cut one or two of the top cards. Dolly looked upon his cut, and there was the Queen of Spades standing upon the head of the identical Jack.

"Coward — coward!" said Dolly. "Here you are on your head again, under the foot of the same brighteyed woman. Hold!" cried she; "what is this? She is a smart one; for she has not only overthrown you, but the big king and all his subjects, save the man with the cross, and stands with two Tens, which denote a triumphant banner waving victoriously over all her enemies."

"Faith!" said Taurus.

"Fury!" cried Janus.

"Fun!" chuckled Dolly.

"Is that all?" cried both her visitors at once.

"Hold!" replied she; "here is the same person whose future destiny I could not see before. He is close behind the kings with an avenging army. Three Tens behind them assure him the victory. The blackhaired woman

of whom you wished is the conqueror of the chief and priest, and this man is the destroyer."

"Of what color are his hair and eyes?" asked Taurus.

"He has dark-brown hair and blue eyes, which is shown by the position of these cards," said Dolly, holding out a diamond between two spades. Now," said Dolly, "wish once more, and for the last time."

The cards were again shuffled and cut as before.

Again were they turned up for Taurus's luck; and with a deep sigh Dolly exclaimed, "Bad luck — bad luck for Taurus. He stands directly between a long string of clubs and spades — one ace indicating a letter, but another spade behind it indicating bad news. Your life for the future will be dark. O, here is something more; but what is it? Truly, there is the man between whom and the darkhaired lady was the chief and the man with the cross and book — now standing face to face with her, lucky dog that he is, and with his feet upon the heads of both the king and his friend."

"That's Britton Waldron," said Janus.

"I have heard enough," groaned Taurus.

"So I should think," replied Dolly. "Here you are again in the very last of the pack, with two red trays upon your breast and One of Spades upon your back. O Jack, Jack! this indicates that you will die with blood upon your soul, and a dagger planted by your own hand in your breast, far away from home and friends."

"Enough!" bellowed Taurus, as he knocked the cards from her hands and scattered them all over the floor, and wiped off the streaming perspiration from his temples.

"Not enough," retorted Dolly, angrily; "you must pay me three shillings for what I have told you, and another shilling for your insult in striking the cards from my hands."

"I shall not pay for such a bad fortune as that you have told me," said he.

"I have only shown you the cards," said Dolly ; "and, besides, both of you told nearly half your own fortune as I proceeded. Did I deceive you in a single card? And did they not come precisely in the order in which I called them off?"

"Well," said Taurus, "I suppose they did."

"Then," said Dolly, "I suppose you must pay me the four shillings."

"I haven't got it," replied he.

"Then I'll make you get it," said she.

"I should like to see you do it," said Taurus ; "for here are two of us against only one old woman."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Dolly, derisively ; "I have power enough at my command to destroy a regiment of cowards like ye."

"Ha! ha!" they both retorted, mockingly ; "we should like to see you use it."

Dolly instantly opened the door leading to the woodshed or entry of the hut, adroitly removing the key from the lock as she did so, and in a moment returned, and while replenishing the fire dropped the key upon the hot coals. While engaged in arranging the fire the key became redhot, when, seizing it with a little hook lying in the chimney corner, she hurried back as if to close the door, and again replaced it in the lock.

"Now," said Dolly, "is the money ready?"

"Not a farthing," said Jack, and at the same time adding tauntingly, "Let's see what power you poss —— ;" the concluding syllable of which he was unable to finish, for his mouth was full of pins. Jack spit and sputtered as he tried to clear his mouth, and sweat worse than ever. Dolly next placed her hand on the table, which immediately commenced tipping and dancing, and finally started off in a lively canter around the room.

Janus now seized his hat, and, with Pan snapping and

snarling close in his rear, made a rush for the door, when his hand, coming in contact with the key, was burned to the bone, and he roared aloud with agony. Taurus tried his hand at it, and with the same result. As they whirled about to see what position Dolly was in, black Tab suddenly slid down the chimney, covered with an indefinite quantity of soot and scattering the ashes and embers in all directions, and now stood, with arched back and eyes of green, glaring frightfully upon the scared visitors.

"O, mercy!" shrieked Taurus.

"O, murder!" roared Janus.

"O, money!" cried Dolly Plot.

"I have but a shilling," said Taurus.

"'Twont do," said Dolly, as she mounted the broomstick which galloped around the room, with Tab following in the rear, while Pan jumped upon the table and set up a most unearthly and dismal howling. Taurus flew again to the door; but it was locked and the key gone.

Janus commenced prying up the window, when a large black hog ran between his legs, knocking him into the middle of the floor and under the table, and kept on his course, grunting and squealing, till he came to the wall, upon which he leaped and cantered along like a horse within the ring of a circus.

"Here," said Janus, giving Taurus a shilling, "is all I have; put it with your own, and let's see if we can't put a stop to these infernal doings."

The hog disappeared from the walls; and Dolly walked out of her little bed room, saying, "Not enough."

"It's every farthing we can raise," replied the men.

Dolly answered by blowing a long stream of fire from her mouth and darting furious and terrible glances at the worthy brace before her.

"Take my hat and shadbelly," shouted Taurus, throwing them on the table, "and I will redeem them to-morrow."

"And mine, too," joined in Janus, flinging the funnel-shaped hat and striped frock on top of the others.

"See that ye fail not to redeem them to-morrow," cried Dolly, as she opened the door and allowed her terror-struck visitors to pass out, "or I bridle both of ye to-morrow night, and ride you twenty miles each."

Thus runneth the legend.

CHAPTER IX.

SCENERY OF NORRIDGEWOCK. — ANOTHER INTERVIEW BETWEEN ROZELLA, THE PRIEST, AND MOGG HEGON. — ARRIVAL OF THE SOLDIERS AT NORRIDGEWOCK. — INTERVIEW BETWEEN SQUIRE LANGDELL AND WALDRON, AND THE SQUIRE'S PLEDGE OF ROZELLA. — DREADFUL SLAUGHTER OF THE INDIANS. — DEATH OF FATHER RALLE AND RECAPTURE OF ROZELLA.

NEVER did the little village at Norridgewock look more beautifully picturesque than upon that bright October morning when Rozella Langdell was confined in the damp and dismal cell, beneath the foot of "the beast," which was crushing the warm lifeblood from her youthful heart; and yet, to the eye of a casual observer, that "beast," so untiring in its hate and so ruthless in its revenge, seemed harmless as a lamb, and had its abode in an edifice tastefully decorated within and without. This building stood, with the little Indian settlement surrounding it, from the bank of the river to the edge of the adjacent forest. Both the village and church were upon an enchanting intervalle formed by a graceful curve of the Kennebec, while all around and beyond stretched a pathless and unbroken wilderness of primeval forest in all its gloom and glory. As the observer stood upon the shore of its silvery waters, he took in at one view the little islands that, like fairy gems, studded the bright expanse; while in the distant horizon, as though the world extended no farther, he saw a range of blue and lofty mountains skirting the sky.

And the matin song, chanted in these romantic solitudes, might have resounded joyously in the ear of the devout worshipper, as it mingled with the murmuring music of the distant waterfall, had not beneath its dulcet tones pined a human soul of more intrinsic worth than all the formal devotees at the shrine of earth's proudest temple, but whose sad and plaintive notes of woe rose and blended with the ascending oblations.

But around this scene of Nature's unbounded freedom and man's inhuman oppression notes of more discordant din were ready to burst upon the unsuspecting villagers and worshippers from bosoms surcharged with heroic determination and burning desire for revenge. A little force had, unobserved by its occupants, reached the thick wood but a short distance from the Indian settlement. Captain Moulton, from York, Harmon, and Vaughan (the first two sent out by the government) had raised a band of soldiers consisting of about eighty men each, to which the little band from Cochecho — among whom were Britton Waldron, Squire Matthew Langdell, and Robert Vaughan, the leading spirits of the enterprise — was attached.

The whole band were in high spirits with but two exceptions — Squire Langdell and Britton Waldron. The squire's heart was almost broken with sorrow; and as he neared the den in which his idol daughter was incarcerated, scalding tears of anxious grief coursed down his furrowed cheeks.

"O Rozella," he incoherently soliloquized, "what sorrow have I brought upon your young and tender heart by bringing you to these inhospitable wilds, where beasts are wilder than nature, and man more ferocious than they! Would that I could regain my stolen lamb and return her to the enclosure of her father's fold ere the howling wolves drink up her warm and innocent blood! O Rozella, if we

ne'er recover you alive, this heart will break in its lonely anguish and these gray locks soon be pillowed in the silent grave!"

"But we'll fight," said Waldron, coming up in season to catch the squire's concluding words; "and terribly will we avenge her wrongs, until the red fiends' blood shall flow like water and our vengeance be fully satiated."

"But our blood, too," said the squire, "may run as freely as theirs."

"Ay; let it, then," replied Waldron. "My blood is no better than that of my brave old father, which ran so freely in that fatal fray, and upon whose face and breast these clerks of their infernal master and accountants of the pit of perdition crossed out their forged accounts, and made their false entries with the pen of the hissing steel, dipped in the inky blackness of their murderous hearts. But," continued he, "if I cannot obtain Rozella alive, together with the heart and hand which, sir, (at the same time bowing low and almost reverentially before him,) I had hoped, with your kind approbation and consent, one day to call my own, then will the heart of Britton Waldron find relief in death, and have gained the height of its ambition in earning by his death, in attempting to rescue her, a place to sleep its long slumber by her side."

"Worthy and noble son!" replied the squire,—"for I must call you such,—let the leaves of these brave old oaks, now rustling in the breeze, record the acknowledgment upon their dry and polished surfaces; and when I refuse to recognize you as the affianced husband of Rozella, may they fly to my feet as swift witnesses of my faithlessness."

As the squire closed, his extended hand was cordially grasped by Waldron, who then, turning to the company of which he had been chosen lieutenant, shouted, in animating tones,—

"Soldiers of Cocheco, are you ready?"

"All ready," responded Captain Robert Vaughan, promptly, "with our knives keenly whetted to peel off the redskins."

Moulton, Harmon, and Vaughan now conferred together; and it was decided that Captain Moulton should proceed a short distance down the river to make an attack on the right, and that Captain Harmon should attack the left; while Captain Vaughan, with Waldron and Langdell, together with the other brave heroes of Cocheco, who begged to be allowed to occupy the most exposed position, were to attack the front.

By a signal of the firing of a gun the attack was to be simultaneous from each division.

In the rear of the village ran the river, through whose strong and rapid current it seemed unlikely that many could escape.

While the little army was thus stationed, and, like the war horse, were "ready to go out to meet the armed men, smelling the battle afar off, the noise of the captains, and the shouting," so impatient were they for the signal to be given for the fierce onslaught, a scene was transpiring within a dark cell beneath the French chapel in the village of a character quite different.

Rozella Langdell was in the midst of one of those "pastoral visits" from her diabolical tormentors with which she had been previously favored. The chain about her ankle had worn quite through the skin, and the limb was swollen and inflamed. She now stood in the presence of and between "the good Father Ralle" and the great chief Mogg Hegon. Her face was pale and sunken; and the scalding tears had so inflamed those eyes, once so brilliant, that they had become bleared and lustreless. Her once glossy hair had become matted together with the dust and damp of her cell, and fell in tangled and dishev-

elled locks over her faded features like wilted leaves over a withered flower. Her dress, torn and disordered, gave indication of the ruthless hands by which she had been dragged to her prison ; and her head was dropped forward, with her chin resting upon her breast. To all these concomitants of woe we have only to add the galling chain, with the heavy stone attached thereto, and the sad picture is complete.

How different now are her looks and feelings from those which animated her bosom on that bright May morning when, upon Flying Cloud, she bounded into the glorious old forest at Merry Meeting amid the tossing up of hats, the waving of handkerchiefs, and the joyful shouts of the whole welcoming multitude !

Can that be the polished brow which once received the flowery crown for its unequalled loveliness ? And listen — in pity, listen ! Was it that voice which then thrilled the grove with its silvery warblings, like the gushing song of some happy wild bird, as she so gracefully rose with her floral honors blossoming upon her brow ? And does she now, as then, sing, —

“ How glorious the scene, and how joyful the day,
In the old woods of green, in the young month of May ” ?

And I wonder if in that gloomy cell, with those grinning skulls, and mouldering crossbones, and horrid implements of torture, —

“ ’Tis May — always May ” ?

Ah, those sobs which break from her agonized bosom would hardly indicate that such is now the case. Even the grave old forest seems to groan aloud in agonizing responses to her broken wailings ; and at the sad condition of their fallen queen the stern granite sentinels weep from crystal eyes beneath their sombre brows of matted moss.

But what has the lighthearted and innocent girl done to merit this cruel fate, or what does she now do? Does she curse that triple monster seen by Elsie Tufton in her ravings, with Janus's face, Taurus's eyes, and Dolly Plot's heart? No; not a curse is conceived in that kind heart or is ushered into being upon her forgiving breath. For what, then, does she suffer? Listen while the priest breaks the silence.

"My daughter has suffered here long enough to have had her stubborn heart softened and subdued. Will she now confess to her spiritual and most holy father, do penance, receive absolution, and marry Mogg Hegan?"

"Neither," was Rozella's response, "as I have often declared to you. My resolution is unchanged and unchangeable; and as you find me to-day, such shall I be to-morrow and forever."

"Then," replied the priest, "you must suffer still further."

"But a little further," replied Rozella, "can I suffer ere all will be over; which I trust will be soon, if I must continue here."

"What impiety!" said the priest. "Would you die an unbeliever and without my pardon and blessing? This hand, if I lay it upon your head, brings life, pardon, and a blessing; if I withhold it, death, imprecation, and a curse."

"Ugh!" grunted Mogg Hegan; "that bring white squaw up to the track and put her on the scent."

"Your blessing and your curse," replied Rozella, raising her head and fixing a calm and unterrified gaze upon the priest, "are alike valueless in my eyes; and I would avoid the contact of your hand, had I the power to do so, as I would the venomous fangs of a serpent; for he, like yourself, could only kill the body; while the soul would fly to the great Centre of goodness from whence it first sprung, unharmed and unpolluted."

“Mogg Hegan,” said the priest, turning pale with rage, “to what instrument of torture shall we resort to punish this obdurate heretic?”

“Ugh!” responded Mogg; “use rack, holy father; stretch white squaw by wrists and heels — two turns make her confess and glad to marry big chief; if not willing, pull joints apart, like other bad squaw.”

“Bring out the rack, then,” cried the priest; and Mogg sprung to a dark recess at one end of the cell and rolled out a strongly-constructed frame of heavy timbers, and mounted on wooden rollers, into the middle of the apartment. “There,” said the priest, “bind her hand and foot upon it, and wrench her frame to the utmost limits of endurance, and at sundown tighten the chains still further.”

Mogg Hegan rudely laid hold of Rozella’s delicate form and dragged her forward to the rack. As she reached the infernal instrument of torture she fell upon her knees, and, lifting her eyes and hands towards heaven, cried aloud, —

“Father, in the name of Him who is mighty and able to save the weak and perishing, I ask for aid and succor. And if the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, I take it by the force of perfect faith — offering as my surety the bonds of love he sealed and signed by his death; therefore I take no denial.”

“God hears not the impious prayers of the heretical unbeliever,” said the priest sternly; when, as the last word escaped his lips, the rattling volley of a hundred muskets burst in upon them through the shattered windows of the church, while balls whistled and splinters flew in every direction, and the chapel trembled and rocked like a foundering vessel in a hurricane.

Father Ralle and Mogg Hegan rushed in wild haste up the dark stairway of the cell and sallied forth to the fight, which was every where raging with the utmost fury. Wild

yells and frightful war whoops broke from the throats of a hundred infuriated savages, contrasting strangely with the utter stillness on the part of the English, who were doing their avenging work in stern silence; while above the yells, and whoops, and rolling volleys of gun and musket rose the piercing screech of death agony and the awful groans of the wounded and dying.

Old Bloody Bones rallied the warriors in the vicinity of his lodge, which was attacked by Moulton; while on the left Harmon's brave band met the savage foe in fierce and bloody encounter. Ere the first attack had been made the Indians about the settlement had caught sight of the approaching foe, and hastily rallied a part of their warriors for the conflict. The English, according to previous arrangement, allowed the Indians to fire the first volley, who overshot their mark, as they anticipated. At the same instant, and while the Indians were between themselves and the chapel, the men under Vaughan received the stern command to fire; and the sharp scythe of Death mowed down a long winrow of mutilated corpses. The remaining part of the panic-stricken redskins wheeled to the left to make good their escape in that direction; but they only ran to the hot embrace of Moulton's gallant band, who poured anew into their fast thinning ranks the leaden messengers of death.

Again they wheeled to escape up the river, where Harmon's bloody reapers stood ready and waiting to thrust their keen sickles of exterminating vengeance into the ripened human harvest now waving before them. Sudden destruction came upon them as a whirlwind, and the rout was complete.

Ralle, as he, with Mogg Hegan, flew from the church, rushed to the foot of the cross, resolved to give his own life to save his flock; but the Indians, unwilling to be outdone in heroic sacrifice for their common cause, rallied

around him and formed a breastwork of their bodies, to protect his life by giving their own. But their generous devotion was of no avail; and priest and people fell, pierced and mangled by a hundred balls from the death-dealing weapons of their inexorable foes.

Coffin, whose wife Bomazeen had so brutally murdered, by dashing out the brains of her infant babe over her own head, now for the first time caught sight of Old Bloody Bones, and bounded like a ferocious panther on his prey. Bomazeen turned from his furious attack and fled towards the river. But his implacable pursuer followed with lightning speed and overtook his flying mark, though, ere he reached it, he was maddened by the anguish of a dozen arrows shot from the Indians in his flight and now rankling in his quivering flesh. They both struck the water together; but Coffin inflicted the first stab, whereupon the old chief turned like a tiger upon his tormentors, and the combat commenced.

After the first blow, and as they closed for the final struggle, Bomazeen had struck the knife from his adversary's hand, and Coffin had broken the bow of the chief. To such extreme tension were the nerves and muscles of each strung that their limbs trembled as if in the expiring throes of death. The water of the river where they were now standing was nearly to their waists, and the bottom was muddy.

Coffin now seized the long lock of hair upon the crown of the chief's head, and, forming a pulley by winding it around his hands, pried out with his thumb one of the glaring balls of the chief, which fell and sunk in the water before his face. But the infuriated savage rallied, and forced him under the water until he became nearly unconscious, when, collecting all his energies for a last effort, he broke from the chief's grasp and rose to the surface. As he came up he caught the limbs of the Indian, turned him

head downward, and, throwing his whole weight upon him, planted him heels up in the soft mud, where he quaked, and kicked, and writhed in agony, but never again arose to light.

Whilst this deadly encounter was transpiring at the river, other contests of equal fury were raging in and about the church. Mogg Hekon, as he rushed from the chapel, flew to his lodge for his weapons, and returned just in season to see the priest shot down by the muskets and hacked to pieces by the knives of his relentless foes. He had discharged his gun several times, and once or twice had done execution. But now he grew more furious than ever, and terribly did his swarthy features glow with added fierceness and revengeful hate ; for he now caught sight of three noted warriors of the Mohawk tribe fighting in the ranks of the English and against himself and brethren. In an instant all fear of death vanished from his breast, and one feeling alone possessed it — a burning desire for vengeance. If his own brethren in blood had turned traitors to their country and to the soil which imbosomed the sacred dust of their fathers, and joined the ranks of their hated usurpers, then blood alone could atone for so foul a disgrace, and the lives of the betrayers should pay the forfeit at his hands.

With the agility of the mountain cat he darted through the English ranks ; and ere his foe could escape or ward off the blow, he had buried his long knife to the haft in his heart. Quick as thought he turned upon another Mohawk, and disabled him by a deep and fatal cut in the breast ; and leaping from the crowd of combatants, shot out from under a dozen bayonets, knives, and tomahawks aimed at his head, and bounded off unharmed.

But the third and only remaining Mohawk in mad pursuit was now upon his track, and at every bound gained fast upon his more exhausted foe, who had shaped his course for the adjacent forest.

Mogg Hegan had reached the edge of the woods when, throwing a glance behind him, he saw his one avenging pursuer close in his rear, and instantly halted and faced his determined adversary. Neither was in the least daunted, but stood for a moment darting mutual glances of intense and deadly hate ere they closed for the final struggle. Both aimed and struck a powerful blow at the same instant, and were each wounded in the arm. Mogg Hegan was the first to strike the second blow, which the Mohawk warded off by a dexterous motion of his muscular arm, and at the same time cut the breast of Mogg to the bone. As he inflicted the dreadful wound he bounded back a few paces, and they again exchanged fiery glances of such livid hate as an Indian only can give.

Then the eyes of Mogg Hegan fell upon the frightful gash from whose yawning depths the blood was rushing in red torrents ; and the sight seemed to add tenfold fury to his already boiling rage. With a terrific yell he bounded upon the Mohawk, who again fended the blow and again stabbed him in the shoulder.

At the next blow Mogg's knife pierced the side of his foe, and, striking one of his ribs, tore the flesh nearly to his back. Both were now weak and staggering from the loss of blood, but without pause or rest continued the bloody combat. Another plunge and the cords of the Mohawk's arm were severed, and by the succeeding stroke his face laid open from his eye to his chin. But his own knife was quivering in the heart of Mogg Hegan, and the mighty chief of the Norridgewocks fell dead at his feet.

In the midst of these personal encounters, and in the general strife of exterminating slaughter, the voices of two of the doomed savages were heard above the awful din of the battle exclaiming, "Let us slay our captives before we ourselves fall !" at the same time bounding off, one in the direction of the lodge in which was Mrs. Lee,

and the other towards the church where Rozella was confined. Vaughan and Squire Langdell gave chase to the former, and cut him down ere he could accomplish his murderous purpose against Mrs. Lee, whom they saved and recaptured. Britton Waldron followed with eagle speed upon the track of the other, who, as he reached and entered the church, plunged at once down the dark passage leading to the cell of torture, thereby gaining somewhat upon Waldron, who was obliged to advance more cautiously through its intricate windings. As he groped along the unknown way he heard an awful shriek at the end of the passage, and, springing forward, reached the cell just in time to see an Indian fall to the floor. Beside the fallen savage stood a woman and a little Indian girl. He sprang upon the Indian just as he was rising to his feet and buried his tomahawk deep in his brain, and then wheeled in fury and aimed a blow at the Indian girl. The blow was in swift descent upon the head of the little squaw when the woman sprang towards him, her chains rattling and her fetters clanking as she did so, caught his arm, and in a piercing voice exclaimed,—

“Hold — hold, my Britton!”

Waldron staggered back and gazed upon her in delighted astonishment; for so much was she altered in appearance that he had not hitherto recognized Rozella.

“Spare this little angel,—this more than dove with the leaf,—for she has saved my life. The tomahawk of the redskin you have just slain was in full descent upon my defenceless head, when, bounding like an arrow from the bow from the steps yonder, she came with full force upon him and laid him prostrate. She seemed as she flew in like Noah’s dove, for she, too, held a leaf in her mouth. Ah, I see it all now,” continued Rozella, approaching nearer to the little girl, who still retained the leaf, “it is the same pictured leaf I gave her on the morning I first

entered the church ; and now, for so slight and simple an act of kindness, she has saved my life."

And as she thus spoke Rozella caught the girl in her arms and pressed her closely to her breast, kissing and caressing her fondly, while Waldron was striking off the fetters which confined her feet.

"What is the name of my little dove?" inquired Rozella in the Indian language, a few words of which she had acquired since her captivity.

"Owega," replied the girl.

"Owega shall never leave me," cried Rozella, warmly ; "and yet I would not take you hence by force as I was brought from home."

"Owega has no home," was the girl's response.

"Then you will go with me, my wild bird?" asked Rozella.

"Owega will go with the White Pigeon," was the soft reply ; and as these words were uttered the last link of the galling chain was snapped asunder, and the three walked joyously forth together.

As they came up from the dismal den in which Rozella had been so long imprisoned, and where she had suffered such barbarous treatment from her inhuman persecutors, her heart swelled with inexpressible emotion, and, falling upon her knees, she offered up the gushing gratitude of her heart for her safe deliverance in fervent and audible prayer. As she rose she saw her father rushing towards her with outstretched arms, into which she flew, while tears of joy streamed from the eyes of both father and daughter.

"Thanks be to God!" uttered the squire, in a tone of deep feeling ; "my lamb is safe. O, how my heart swells with overwhelming gratitude for her deliverance and restoration who is the one bright star of my dark pathway of life and the comfort and solace of my declining years !

The noble-hearted Waldron," continued the squire, turning to Waldron, who still retained the hand of Rozella in his own, "who has saved your life, is worthy of the hand he has so bravely won."

"Dear father," replied Rozella, "my feelings of heartfelt joy that I have been spared to you are far beyond my power to express, and," she continued, with a speaking look at Waldron, "I can never adequately repay my brave deliverer for all he has dared and suffered in my behalf; but here," she pursued, drawing Owega forward, "is the little dove, with the leaf still in her mouth, to whom I owe my life; for it was she who saved it. Here, upon these steps, I gave her the leaf; and she clung to me and offered a prayer for the safety of the White Pigeon. And when the fatal axe was descending upon my head in the dark cell beneath us, it was she who averted the impending blow, by dashing the savage assailant to the ground. I acknowledge she was but the means of my deliverance; but as the great Power to whom I looked for aid and succor chose her as the swift-winged angel to execute his will, so I have chosen her for my companion and friend, and whom, with your leave, dear father, I will take to our happy home."

"Certainly," replied the squire, "she shall go with us if she wishes;" and he planted a kiss upon Owega's cheek as she stood, "smiling tearfully," with her hand clasped in that of Rozella and the maple leaf still between her lips.

Owega, assured by the kind looks of all around her and feeling more at ease, now drew a little parchment of eel-skin from beneath the little thin blanket which but partially concealed her lithe and elegant form, and, depositing the leaf in its folds, again fastened it with a hedge thorn to the inside of the blanket. She then, in her own tongue, and looking alternately at Rozella and Waldron, said,—

“ White Pigeon saved Owega from tomahawk.”

Britton comprehended her meaning by the expressive glance she gave him quite as well as though he had understood her words ; and his eyes dropped before her stern look, and his face became red as flame ; but as he reflected that his intended act resulted from supposing her an enemy instead of a friend, and that happily, by the timely interference of Rozella, she was still alive, he composed his features, and was just raising his eyes, when the alarm of fire was heard, and dense volumes of fire and smoke rolled out from the rear of the church, on whose steps they were now standing.

As they left the now fast consuming church, Vaughan came up with Mrs. Lee, and hearty congratulations were exchanged ; and, proceeding onward, they met a detachment of soldiers from Cocheco, with an English sailor, named Phantom Marine, whom they had found confined in one of the lodges, and also a bright lad of some sixteen summers, who had acted as servant to the priest.

The soldiers under Moulton and Harmon now brought forward the flagstaff once raised over the church, with the flag attached, and, uprooting the cross in front of the chapel, threw the whole into the burning edifice, that no vestige or relic of what they considered Jesuitical priestcraft and Popish idolatry should be left undestroyed. What few Indians had not been killed had made their escape into the surrounding wilderness ; and after destroying the remaining wigwams the English turned their backs upon the ruined village of Norridgewock, with its smoking church and lodges and ghastly heaps of the unburied slain.

The companies of Moulton and Harmon returned to their homes in the settlement near and upon the sea shore of Maine, which they reached in safety, receiving the thanks and commendations of the entire community.

The little band of Coheco, on the second night of their homeward course, reached the shore of the glorious old Sebago, whose glistening face seemed to beam upon them in a smile of welcome and congratulation. They halted and struck a fire in the same ashes and with the same brands left by the Indians in their homeward march with their captives. Coffin, who was of the number who had made their escape from their captors at this place, now related the story of the wonderful lights in the heavens, the terrible panic of the savages, and their own fortunate escape. As the conversation became animated, and mirth and merriment began to abound, Rozella, for the first time since they had started for home, laughed aloud as she ran to the edge of the woods and drew the attention of all by her recital.

"Here," said she, "is the very spot where I sighed for freedom, and while singing aloud the inspiring words, 'Sweet, sweet liberty!' fell plump into the encircling arms of Old Bloody Bones. O horror! I can hardly laugh when I think to what awful depths of depression my heart sank as I felt his cold arms coiling around me and holding me in their snaky folds like the deadly embrace of some monstrous serpent; and even now I shudder as I recall it."

CHAPTER X.

ROZELLA'S RETURN AND INTERVIEW WITH ELSIE TUFTON. — ELSIE TUFTON'S RECOVERY AND ROZELLA'S CHRISTIAN ADMONITION.

"Who art thou?" said a wild yet feeble voice, as a lady of quiet and gentle manners and demeanor entered the apartment, but whom the inquirer evidently supposed to be some dangerous intruder. Then, with lustreless and glassy eyes, with a pale and deathlike countenance, and hair standing out in all directions, she continued, "I've seen her somewhere. It seems to me her name is May day; she looks like one. Ha! ha! Flying Clouds, and May poles, and greased pigs! Ha! ha! O the fish I caught in Charles Cutts's golden net! Here they are, in my hair."

"Dear Elsie!" softly exclaimed the visitor.

"Elsie!" interrupted the other; "it seems to me I have heard that name before. "O!" she wildly shrieked, "I know her now! She is the one I saw snatch the Indian's gleaming steel and bury it deep in the heart of Weseme, the handsome crossbreed. O, it made my blood run cold as she struck the blow! How could she do a deed so terrible? I would not have done it for worlds. But they say he had killed her sweetheart, and was wearing his scalp in his belt. Ha! ha! Then I don't blame her, if she loved him as much as I do Charles. Why don't he come?"

"Elsie," continued the visitor, "is your own name ; and I am your true friend, Rozella Langdell."

"O, yes," replied Elsie ; "I have heard that name ; the kind Rozella Langdell they used to call her ; and some said she was Queen of the Forest."

"I am she," responded Rozella, "and have come to see you and to restore you to health."

"But where is Elsie ?" asked the other. "I do not see her."

"It is yourself who is Elsie," answered Rozella.

"Me !" exclaimed Elsie. "I killed the handsome cross-breed ? Ha ! ha !"

"Now, dear Elsie," said Rozella, "will you promise to be calm while I lay the whole matter before you and explain how every thing occurred ?"

"Yes," was her reply, "when Charles comes for his golden fish net."

During the absence of Rozella at Norridgewock Elsie Tufton had been removed from Heard's garrison, at Cocheco, where we left her at the time of the awful massacre, to the house of her father. The violent fever with which she had suffered so severely had run its course ; but her reason was not yet restored. She had been carefully nursed and attentively watched by the whole family, and no means at their command left untried to restore her again to health of body and soundness of mind. She had been unsparingly dosed with decoctions of all the roots, and herbs, and barks which the settlement or the woods afforded, and, strange as it may seem, had lived in spite of all. It was now a week since her fever left her ; and her mental derangement seemed to increase as her strength slowly returned.

On the morning when Rozella entered the chamber of her sick friend she found Mr. Tufton standing by her bed on one side and another man on the other — the utmost

strength of both being necessary to confine her to its narrow limits.

After the conversation had reached the point to which we traced it, Rozella called for a comb, with an abundance of cold water and a requisite quantity of towels, and then requested of the family to be left alone with the patient. To this they consented, but on condition that they should remain near at hand, so as to be able to fly to her assistance should the patient become unmanageable or attempt in her frenzy to injure herself or her friend.

"Now," said Rozella, after all had retired, "you must allow me, before I relate to you the story of the handsome crossbreed, to thoroughly wash your head and comb and dress your hair."

"No," cried Elsie, as she sprang to the farther side of the bed; "it is full of fish, and you shall not touch them."

"Let me see if there are any," said Rozella.

After much coaxing, she gained permission to make an examination; after which she exclaimed, "Not a single one in your hair; and if there ever were any, they have left. Now, hold your head over the bedside, and allow me to cleanse it with the cool water."

"No," said Elsie; "they will swim off."

"Let them swim, then," said Rozella; "that is the very thing I want."

Elsie now consented, and after her head, and face, and finally her entire person, had been washed and rubbed quite dry, and her matted hair combed and arranged, the effect produced was such that, what with the action of the comb and the friction of the towel, which excited a gentle perspiration, her extreme nervous irritability was much allayed.

"Now," asked Rozella, "what does my dear Elsie think about the fish?"

"I think you have drowned them out," replied Elsie;

"for I don't feel them now, nor hear their singing in my ears. The pressure, too, is removed from my head ; and I think it is low tide in my brain now."

"There never have been any fish in your hair," said Rozella.

"Why," said Elsie, "did I not feel and see them? and were they not pink fish? and did I not see their blood run? If there were none, what made me think so?"

"You have come to the point, at last," said Rozella; "and I will now relate the promised story of Weseme, the handsome crossbreed, which you must know, in order that the whole matter should be made plain to your comprehension. Then, with a firm faith and confiding trust in Him who is able to save and heal you, you will be well again."

"And who are you," asked Elsie, "that you think to heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out devils, rob me of my May crown at Merry Meeting, kill the handsome crossbreed, and — and — Charles is yet alive; he looked in here last night and said so — he did."

"My dear Elsie," said Rozella, "you have a confused recollection of the whole affair; but you fear to meet the dreadful reality face to face, and so rise above it. Do you not remember the evening you rolled up Charles's hair in the pink papers for the boat ride, and how you joked him about frightening the fish out of the river?"

"I do not know but it was so," replied Elsie.

"And," continued Rozella, "after you retired to rest, did you not think and dream of the same thing until the Indians awoke you?"

"Perhaps it was so," again replied Elsie. "But Charles is alive; I know he is; and that maiden that killed the crossbreed is a murderer."

Proceeding in this way, step by step, did Rozella prepare Elsie's mind for each succeeding event in the whole

bloody drama, until she became more calm and composed, and seemed to gain strength to meet and realize the truth, sad and stern as it was, without flinching.

Rozella sat by her bedside during the night, and bathed her temples, wiped away her tears, and soothed her troubled spirit; and towards morning she fell into a deep and quiet slumber, from which she awoke much refreshed. Her first words to Rozella were, "Is what you have told me true, or only a dream?"

"It is but too true," answered Rozella, "in every particular."

"Then," replied Elsie, "nothing is left for me but to die; for I cannot endure the crushing weight of this awful calamity."

"No," said Rozella; "unaided and alone you cannot; therefore, in the words of the good book, 'Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee, and strengthen thee, and comfort thee.'"

"O," cried Elsie, "will he hear my humble cries?"

"He will," responded Rozella; "for he heard mine, when my case seemed far more desperate for the body than is yours for the mind. You must, like me, with the strong hooks of faith grapple upon his promises with a determination as strong as death itself, and, like wrestling Jacob, cry aloud, 'I will not let thee go until thou bless me.' He never did, and he never will, turn a determined soul empty away."

But, not to weary the reader with further particulars, suffice it to say that all her trials and sufferings, her doubts and shrinkings, and her griefs and sorrow were finally vanquished; she triumphed over the weakness of the flesh and the power of the insane devil that had raged within her fevered brain; and in one week from the time Rozella first visited the sick chamber of her dear friend, Elsie Tufton was "clothed, and in her right mind."

CHAPTER XI.

MEETING OF MRS. LANGDELL WITH THE RETURNED CAPTIVES AND FRIENDS.
— PHANTOM MARINE AND THE GHOST AT BUCK'S HORN INN.

HAPPY was the meeting at Squire Langdell's on the morning the little band of warriors of Cocheco returned home to their loved Laconia from the bloody slaughter of Norridgewock. Mrs. Langdell had reached her home but the evening previous, from Boston, whither she had been on a visit to her brother. And although the meeting between Rozella and her mother was joyful and transporting, yet sad was that mother's heart when she found to what terrible sufferings and perils her beloved daughter had been so cruelly subjected.

Mrs. Lee was domiciled in the house of a relation in the settlement ; the little Owega had found a home much to her liking at Squire Langdell's ; and Phantom Marine, the English sailor whom they had liberated at Norridgewock, had taken a berth at the Buck's Horn Inn.

The Buck's Horn Inn was a singular-looking house, and the only house of entertainment kept in this section of Laconia. It was a story and a half high in the centre, and one story at the eaves ; that is to say, its roof ran about half the width of the house, then it fell half a story, and another roof covered the remainder.

It had little bow windows and bow doors, and was furnished with odd-looking furniture, consisting principally

of board settees, wood boxes, and bootjacks. In the principal room stood a tall brass clock, with its head hard against the ceiling, with a crescent moon in the upper part of the dial and above its face.

This venerable timepiece, at every swing of the pendulum, wheezed and groaned in a nasal tone ; and in the nighttime, when the house was still, its performances in the vocal line could be compared to nothing earthly, and seemed more like the discordant rehearsal of a choir of asthmatic ghosts and goblins.

The other rooms were hung around with strange pictures and portraits of old dukes and barons, the originals of which had either been hanged themselves, or instrumental in performing that service for others.

Upon the mantel pieces stood the images of saints and sailors, thin-ribbed horses and gaunt hounds.

Phantom Marine was as odd a specimen of the jolly, no, jaded, tar as ever rode the sea under the broad trident of old Neptune. On their passage, as he termed it, from Norridgewock, he had "played the agreeable" with Rozella, whose delight at his marvellous stories only served to make him lie faster than ever, to the great scandal of the more staid and sober minded. Among other matters he confessed to her that the thing of which he stood most in dread was his own shadow, which annoyed him wherever he went.

He had spent years, he said, in studying how to get rid of it, but had not yet succeeded. He had travelled both by sea and by land, in hopes that he should lose it, and had journeyed far and near in search of some happy land where a man would not be everlastingly dogged about by a ghostly shadow. He had, also, queer notions of the powers of the vital principle ; and was afraid to eat meat, for fear that the animal would come to life again, and, resenting the indignity, devour him in return. Nei-

ther would he go to a well, for fear that the earth would cave in, and he thereby be unable to navigate his craft to shore.

When he arrived at the Buck's Horn Inn, which had a large pair of spreading antlers painted upon the sign, he stood and gazed at it until the landlord, who was a little fat Dutchman, came out and asked, "Vat ter tuyfel you look at te sign for so long?"

"Suspicious, very suspicious," replied Phantom.

"Vat, did ye never see a puck's 'orn pefore?" asked the Dutchman.

"Devil's horn, more like, I should think," responded Marine. "Do such animals live in these latitudes?" asked he.

"It pe no animal," replied the landlord; "it pe only de 'orn of de puck."

"Suspicious," was the only remark of the sailor; and approaching the house with the landlord, he remarked, "Squire Langdell sent me here to take a berth and get my grog and rations, till I come to anchor on a spot of my own, and become a regular land lubber."

"Valk in, den," said the host; and, entering the bar room, Phantom was invited to sit down, which he did after a minute examination and thorough trial of what he called "the keel and bottom" of the proffered chair. He then took off his pack, but kept it on his knees; for he saw so many "strange-craft" and "queer-rigged vessels" about him that he was suspicious that he had fallen in with a crew of "bloody pirates," by whom he was liable to be made "to walk the plank" at any moment.

But Phantom Marine, by the aid of a stiff glass of grog, which, as he said, was "the only blamed thing he had yet seen that did not look suspicious," finally managed to raise his courage so much as to consider himself in very good quarters; and in the course of the evening, additional

rations of grog so enlarged his views and opened his heart that he saw every thing double, sung a dozen sea songs, old innumerable "yarns," and wound up by calling for his berth.

"He pe one tuyfelish vine vellow," said the Dutchman to the crowd of idlers who had been entertained freely at the sailor's expense; "and ash ter pe no vimmen peoples come here tish night, he will have te pest room in te house."

As they passed up the stairs leading to the "pest room," at the head of the flight Phantom broke out, "Blast my eyes, but this is the first time in all my voyages that I ever went aloft to swing my hammock, and it looks — hic — a little — hic — suspicious."

As Marine's eyes fell upon one of the pictures with which the room was adorned, he stopped suddenly and looked extremely suspicious.

"Vat you zee?" said the landlord; "anoder puck's 'orn?"

"I see some eyes there," said the sailor, "that I don't like. They look too much like a pair I once saw pop out from under a big wave in a squall at sea."

"He te same vons," answered the host; "he vell oferpoard at zee and trown himzelf, ant hish vrouw leaf him here ash zhe bass droo to Numper Vour on te Connet-tigut."

Phantom now began to tremble, and begged the landlord to take it from the room, when a loud rap was heard at the outer door, and the Dutchman, bawling out "More new zettlers," ran from the apartment, closing the door as he went.

But the loud and cheerful voices of the new comers below soon dispelled his rising fears, and he turned into bed. It was a dark and windy night without; so he left his candle burning, to enable him the better to detect any

suspicious object in his immediate latitude and longitude; and, covering up his head, he listened to the noisy laughter of those below until the sounds grew more and more indistinct and his senses were finally locked fast in the chains of sleep.

How long he slept he could not tell; but he was awakened by the bedclothes being suddenly pulled off him by an invisible hand; for, as he looked, no one was to be seen.

"A ghost," said Phantom, dolefully. "Just as I expected;" and his eyes glared at the strange pictures on the walls, and his teeth chattered from fright and fear. The candle had burned low, and a dim, dancing blaze flickered from the wick. The clock in the lower room groaned and wheezed worse than ever, and in its clashing sounds and brass ring Phantom heard but the agonizing groans of the dying, as their infernal murderers mashed up the heads of their victims; for, at each blow, the ring of the ghostly anvil vibrated through the room.

The dreadful beast upon the signboard, with his monstrous horns, was coming to life again; for he heard it shrieking, and saw it bounding back and forth by the window, as it struggled to break loose from its enclosure upon the flaming signboard.

The wind was still high, and the old inn shook and swayed before it. Again Phantom Marine ventured to look upon the mysterious picture upon the wall. He was certain that it moved, and he saw it wink an eye at him; and he could not be mistaken in this, for it was full in the dancing blaze of the candle, which likewise began to act strangely. He looked at the mantel piece; and the short, earthen alderman upon it was leering maliciously at him, with a broad grin upon his jolly face, as though he had just ordered a fresh bowl of turtle soup. Notwithstanding the night was cold, Phantom Marine was covered with a reeking perspiration.

He looked at the thin-ribbed horse and the gaunt hound that stood above him, when at that very instant the hound leaped down upon the horse and caught him by the nose, who kicked furiously, and both fell in the violent struggle for the mastery to the floor.

"Murder! murder!" shouted Phantom, and bounded from his bed for the door which the landlord had shut as he passed out. But, horror of all the horrors he had before seen! upon the inside of the door—which, being swung into the room as he entered, prevented his seeing it—was the image of the veritable "Ancient Henry," or the "Old Harry" himself, cloven foot and all.

Phantom's knees grew weak and smote together; and he fell upon the floor still bawling "Murder! murder!" at the top of his voice. But he felt that he had no time to lose; so, gathering up his strength with his limbs, he rushed to the bow window, which was fastened down; and as he looked out, the sign with its ghastly head upon it swung close to his face. Again he roared "Murder!" louder than ever, when at that moment the little Dutchman, hearing the outcry, mounted the stairs and opened the door, and now stood waist deep amidst chairs and washstands; bowls, pitchers, and basins, from the load of the new comers he had, and piled up here to house them from the expected storm.

"Vat ter tuyfel ish de matter here?" roared the Dutchman.

Phantom wheeled around, and, seeing the open door, sprang with all his might to escape; but so wild and glaring were his eyes that the Dutchman, supposing him stark mad, shut to the door in his face. But such was the impetus which Phantom had acquired in his rapid flight from the window that the door was not the least impediment to his exit. He went straight through the devil, door, and Dutchman, and alighted in the centre of the stack of wash-

stands and crockery ; and the whole concomitant rolled down the entire length of the stairs and brought up with a general crash at the bottom.

The "tableau" was striking and picturesque. The stands and chairs were groaning and creaking, the crockery rattling and ringing, the little Dutchman buried under the fallen mass, and, with his bullet head protruding through the aperture of a washstand, shouting, "Vat ter tuyfel ish goming next?" while Phantom Marine was snugly seated in a capacious washbowl upon the top of the heap, roaring "Murder !" in a stentorian voice.

The house was now in a complete uproar ; and ghosts in white sheets were more plenty than ever, listening to the dreadful outcries beneath the avalanche upon the broad stair.

The larger, if not the better, half of the Dutchman now made her appearance, paddling and puffing along among the medley of barking dogs and their frightened owners, with her broad bosom rising and falling like a huge bellows covered with red leather, and not comprehending the meaning of the "tableau" before her or noticing that her husband was under the avalanche, bellowed "Get out !" in tones that made the house jar and the dogs slink away in utter silence.

"How in the name zhall I get out?" responded the Dutchman, supposing the "vermilion edict" just promulgated to have been levelled at his devoted head ; and his spouse, now comprehending the true state of the case, went to work in good earnest, and in a few minutes released her spouse, who, followed by Phantom Marine, took refuge in the kitchen. Both were somewhat bloody with wounds and cuts inflicted by the broken crockery, but fortunately no vital part was seriously injured.

The Dutchman now cast a terrified look at the sailor and snarled out, —

“Dunder and blixen ! ish Vantom Mazhine grazzy ?”

“ Ghosts, ghosts,” replied the sailor. “ I thought I had sailed where they were thick enough before ; but I never was in a harbor where they were so plenty as here, nor entered a Dutch port with such a cargo of furniture and live stock upon my deck.”

By this time it was daylight ; and Phantom Marine, calling for his bill and bundle and paying for his ghostly lodgings, flew from the house, and, with one wild glance at the frightful signboard, left the haunted Buck's Horn Inn of Laconia.

CHAPTER XII.

SOCIAL MEETING AT THE HOUSE OF SQUIRE LANGDELL. — STORY OF THE PHANTOM SHIP BY MARINE. — THE WIDOW LEE FULL IN LOVE WITH THE NARRATOR. — FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE MAN WITH THE TWINKLE EYE.

It was a bright moonlight evening, just three weeks after the battle of Norridgewock, when the soldiers and their friends met at Squire Langdell's to exchange congratulations upon the success of their late campaign. There had, to be sure, been divers previous meetings, but of a private and personal rather than general character; but this evening nearly all in the settlement were present.

Rozella had been stopping with her friend Elsie Tufton until she had recovered sufficiently to be able to leave her own home, when Rozella had taken her to the house of Squire Langdell, where she still remained. Besides Rozella and Elsie there were present Squire Langdell and wife, Britton Waldron and Robert Vaughan, Mrs. Lee and Owega, George Coffin and Phantom Marine, together with a large number of other persons whose names we need not mention.

All those present understood the condition of mind in which Elsie Tufton had been; therefore all allusion in her hearing to the sad fate of Charles Cutts, and even the mention of his name, was studiously avoided.

After the general conversation had nearly subsided Coffin related his terrible struggle with Old Bloody Bones, and the death of the inhuman wretch, encircled in his own arms, in the muddy bed of the Kennebec. At this narration Elsie laughed for the first time during the evening, and declared it to be "the first case to her knowledge in which an Indian was enclosed in a *coffin* before his death." This enlivened the whole company, and many amusing anecdotes were related, when, to cap the whole, Squire Langdell nearly split the sides of his guests by relating the awful encounter between Phantom Marine and the ghosts at the Buck's Horn Inn — of his narrow but fortunate escape from their infernal grasp, and subsequent arrival at his house the next morning in such a fright that he did not get over it for several days, and of his decided refusal to again risk his life by a return to the haunted inn. "So," continued the squire, "I have kept him ever since, and do not know but I shall be obliged to do so for the future."

"It may be," replied Phantom, "that I was more scared than hurt, and deserve all your jokes ; but you can never convince me that the Buck's Horn Inn is not a haunted house, and that there has not been some foul murder committed there. For I profess to be a pretty good judge in these matters, having seen sights in the heavens and upon the ocean which put all the fearful sights and sounds at the Buck's Horn Inn out of hailing distance forever."

"O," shouted the whole company, "a ghost story! a ghost story! Let's have it at once."

"Not to-night," replied the sailor ; "for it makes me faint and weak to think of it."

"If that's all," said the squire, going to the sideboard and taking out a bottle of choice old Burgundy, "here is something that will give you a stout heart while you relate it."

THE FATA MORGANA.

"Well," replied Phantom Marine, "I wish you all to understand that this is not an imaginary story, if the ghosts at Buck's Horn Inn are imaginary; for my mess-mates all saw it, and in panic and terror ran below to escape it."

"Escape what?" broke out a new settler, with one eye closed and an impatient twinkle in the other, at the same time giving his chair a nervous hitch sideways.

"Escape what is going to happen," replied Phantom, as he wiped his brow and took another glass of Burgundy.

"'Gad," said the nervous man, "I believe we shall all escape it; for I don't see as it is likely to happen in our day, to say the least."

The rest of the company now grew impatient in their turn, and requested the nervous man to "give it a chance to happen;" and finally silence prevailed and the sailor was requested to "go on."

"Go on where?" asked the sailor.

"On board," shouted all.

"I never go on board," replied he, "with an empty stomach, as you will presently hear."

Then, helping himself to another glass, he wiped his mouth, and, with a deep sigh, began his story:—

"I once was on board an English vessel bound from London to Reggio, on the Straits of Messina, in Italy. She was called the Sea Fowl; and a fine craft, too, she was,—I will always say that for the bird,—and rode the water like a duck. At that port the captain exchanged our cargo for wines and silks, which we were to carry to the wild coasts of America. Before I went on board at Reggio, to bid farewell to her lovely coast, I partook freely of her sweet and exhilarating wines, which are not

wholly unlike some in the squire's sideboard — all, of course, in honor to the serene air and glorious sky in that enchanting land we were about to leave on our long and perilous voyage ; and, in addition, had filled a large jug with the same enlivening beverage, the better to keep my courage up ; so, you see, what followed cannot be charged to my cowardice this time, any how.

“ The evening after we cleared the port was clear and mild ; so, bringing my jug on deck and placing it by my side, I stood leaning over the vessel's side and gazing into the clear waters as they reflected the beautiful heavens above them. I was thus musing silently and in perfect tranquillity, when all at once a vessel appeared in the clouds at the distance of about half a mile from our own craft ; but, unlike our own, it sailed beneath the clouds, keel up, and with its long and tapering masts pointing downward towards the water.

“ She rode the aerial ocean as lightly as a sea bird, alternately rising and falling gracefully upon the cloudy waves, with an occasional and almost imperceptible lateral motion, as if shaking the fleecy spray from her snow-white plumage. Her masts, sails, and rigging were not unlike other vessels ; while to her mizzen mast was attached one banner, and to a staff in front of her boom another — both of the same delicate texture as the cloudy waters through which she so buoyantly glided.

“ Her decks, from stem to stern, were covered with piles of gold, diamonds, and precious stones of every kind and in immense quantities, from whose dazzling surfaces flashed a thousand brilliant rays of every conceivable shade and gradation of hue and color.

“ She was manned by as hale and handsome a crew as ever went on board a craft since Neptune ruled the seas, and every evolution in her management was performed with a celerity and adroitness which would have been en-

vied by the oldest 'salt' that ever rived a rope and reefed a sail.

"Thus enchantingly did she float in the 'upper ocean' around our vessel: then each shadowy sailor, raising his silvery tarpauling, with its golden band, swung it around his head. Thereupon the captain walked to the hatchway, which opened of its own accord at his approach, and the sweetest music that ever rolled upon mortal ear gushed up from the depths below, until even the ship itself thrilled and vibrated with the unearthly strains.

"As she sailed past us we saw her name in diamond letters upon her stern. It was the Celestial. When she had rode around our vessel our captain arose and called for three cheers to be given for the Celestial; and every man of us cheered three times at the top of his voice. As we ended the music of the Celestial ceased; and at the next instant the aerial ship broke from the vapory element in which she had been so majestically gliding, and fell to the ocean by our side. Three quarters of the distance she fell with her masts downward; but at that point she turned like the lightning's flash completely over, and, striking the water obliquely, keel downwards, slid again through the waves.

"The moment she reached the water she changed from a celestial ship to a mudscow of the most repulsive and disgusting appearance. Our captain shouted, with stentorian voice, 'She has fallen — she has fallen!' and, with all the crew save myself, hurried down the hatchway. I also started with the others, but stumbled over Stout Heart, as I called my jug, and I bethought me that a hearty draught of its contents would perhaps entitle me to that appellation; so, raising it to my mouth, I drank about a pint. The effect was magical; and I now felt bold enough to face even the grim monster Death. Wheeling about, I gazed once more upon the changed vessel, and the sight

which met my view was indeed appalling. Her decks were now covered with loathsome and putrid corpses, whose fleshless arms and eyeless skulls were as repulsive to the sight as the overpowering stench of the decaying and rotten flesh was to the smell. Her drunken and bloated crew were reeling to and fro and wallowing in the bloody filth of her polluted deck, or assailing each other with horrid oaths and blasphemies — each one, as, with bloody dagger, he struck down his fellow, echoing the cry of our captain, ‘Fallen — fallen!’

“A dense black cloud hung over her blacker masts and sails, and the red lightning leaped from its murky folds in bolts of lurid flame, when, as I looked, the bows of the infernal craft were shattered into a thousand fragments, and the remainder, pausing for an instant, as if in preparation for the awful leap, reeled, and then plunged and disappeared in the yawning depths of the ocean. In that momentary pause her name — now written in letters of blood — again met my eye; and that, too, was changed, and, instead of the former appellation of the Celestial, I now saw the name of Dolly Plot!”

A piercing shriek rang through the room as the sailor pronounced the last words of his marvellous narration, who, as he looked around upon his auditors, saw Elsie Tufton lying senseless upon the floor; Rozella, pale and trembling, with her grappling irons (to use his own words) fast upon Waldron’s arm; Squire Langdell, and wife, and Vaughan in one group, wiping the perspiration from their brows, and clutching each other in a convulsive grasp; while Owega stood upon the table as straight as an arrow, going through the Indian formula for exorcising evil spirits.

He looked for the nervous man with the twinkling eye; but he was not in the room. Hearing a noise at the win-

dow, he looked in that direction ; and there stood the new settler outside the window, staring into the room with protruding eyes and hair standing off from his head in all directions.

The widow Lee alone stood unmoved ; which she could not have done but for the fact—as subsequently ascertained from her acknowledgment—that she had taken a deeper interest in the man than in the story.

All eyes were now turned upon the sailor, who sat, cool and composed, with a singular smile upon his face, apparently enjoying the panic and terror of his frightened auditors.

After Elsie had been restored to consciousness and a reaction taken place in the minds of the company, a hearty laugh broke from all lips at the scene which had just transpired ; and Rozella, addressing the sailor, said,—

“Now tell me, if you please, since it seems you have been talking in riddles all the while, what you meant by your story of travelling from one country to another to escape your shadow.”

“It was a dangerous disease,” replied he, “of the chest, which had reduced me to a shadow ; and I travelled to escape it.”

“And why would you not eat meat ?” inquired she. “For fear the animal would come to life and devour you ?”

“Because,” returned he, “I knew that, in my condition, meat would create blood faster than my debilitated organs could receive and diffuse it through the system, which, of course, would sink under the load.”

“And what of the well,” continued she, “and of your fear in going near it, lest the earth should cave in and your bark not get to shore again ?”

“It was the well of life,” was the reply, “of which I spoke ; and I feared to have my blood drawn, because I knew that in that case this earthly body would fall in and my bark never come to shore.”

"And is there any significance in your remaining on the deck of the Sea Fowl when all your messmates had fled below?" pursued Rozella.

"Yes," replied he; "but it refers to the present and future, and is a token and pledge that, as I am now upon the deck of the good ship Laconia, I will never leave her until I see that low, black mudscow, Dolly Plot, with all her infernal crew, shattered into a thousand fragments and sunk forever in the yawning depths of her own dark reflections."

"And how about the ghosts at the Buck's Horn Inn?" inquired Squire Langdell, laughing.

"O, whew!" cried the sailor; "to tell the truth, I was a little downhearted at leaving you and"—with a sly glance at the widow Lee—"your agreeable company, which the odd and unusual appearance of every thing at the inn served to increase; and the Dutchman's whiskey, I suppose, did the rest of the mischief."

"Well," said the squire, "as you have cleared up all these mysteries so satisfactorily, we will now drop your ghostly name of Phantom, and for the future call you simply Marine."

While the above conversation was being held the widow Lee had told Mrs. Langdell that, in her opinion, there was not a braver man than Marine in all Laconia. She then alluded to her late loss, and, with a deep sigh, remarked that it seemed a long time since her husband's death at the massacre of Waldron's garrison, and the country could ill afford the loss of so good and brave a man.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Langdell; "and in a community like this, where foes and forests are to be felled, it is but a duty to make good a loss of this kind without wasting too long a time in useless sorrow and unavailing lamentations. Besides," added she "we must obey the Scripture

command, and not only subdue the forests, but cultivate the earth as well."

At this remark the widow's eyes rolled round towards Marine like a vessel luffing to the breeze, although the force of Mrs. Langdell's words partook more of the nature of a gale; while Marine's eyes, like a ship on a *Lee* shore, "stood off and on" all the rest of the evening.

A short time before the company broke up, the widow Lee, seeing an open harbor in the latitude of Marine, sailed alongside, and finally came to anchor in a chair near him.

"I think, Mr. Marine," observed she, "that you have set your sails right to-night, and have run all other crafts bravely down."

"O," replied Marine, "I believe I have not sunk but one vessel yet, the nervous man not having yet wheeled his ship into line."

"No," laughed the widow; "nor will he. He has probably got the other eye open by this time, and will never again risk his shattered bark among these breakers. But," continued she, laying her hand upon her heart, "although you have sunk but one vessel, you have seriously damaged another, which I am afraid will soon fill and go down."

The widow was too deep for Marine this time; and, failing to comprehend her meaning, he asked, "Who is it?" at the same time casting his eyes around the room, and then resting them again upon the countenance of the widow, whose mischievous eyes, humid and glistening with ardent emotion, were gazing into his own.

There was no misinterpreting that look; and Marine gallantly replied,—

"Ah, it will never do to let that beautiful craft sink; and, rather than that such a calamity should happen, I will take charge of the craft myself."

The widow now called for her bonnet and cloak, as the

company had begun to disperse, and while putting them on remarked, —

“I have a long way to go; and it is so dark that I fear I shall lose my way unless I have a pilot.”

“If,” responded Marine, “you will put me at the helm, I will pilot you safe into harbor, be the dangers many or few.”

“Certainly,” rejoined the widow, smiling from out her weeds like the night-blooming cereus, “nothing would please me better than to have my course directed by a seaman so gallant and brave as yourself when our enemies lurk on every hand.”

The hour was now late; and the whole company, with mutual good wishes and good nights, separated for their respective homes.

The long distance between the house of Squire Langdell and the relative with whom the widow Lee resided seemed to the new acquaintances quite too short, although the night was extremely cold. They had talked of the party — of the Indians, who they both hoped would not rise again — of the weather in all its tenses — and finally of the tract of land which Marine was expecting to take up and clear in the spring for his own homestead.

Widow Lee then alluded, very sorrowfully of course, to the death of her late husband — how severely she felt his loss, and that she did not know whom she could get to cultivate her own land, already under improvement, as she did not feel able to hire, and dreaded moving back again into her house, now so lonely and desolate.

Marine would gladly have informed her of what he should like to have her do in the case under consideration; but he dared not intimate his wish, for to him women generally, and widows in particular, were too profound an enigma for him to solve; so he kept silence. They had

now reached their destination ; and the widow had mounted the doorstep and turned around to say " Good night," when Marine again saw the mischievous orbs of the widow flashing in the starlight like the stars themselves ; and, quick as thought, and without considering the awful consequences of the rash act, he made a rush up the steps, and dashing under the widow's bonnet, tore a " loud-sounding " kiss — to use an Homeric epithet — from her rosy lips, and then, as if frightened at his awful audacity, bounded again into the middle of the road.

He now ventured to look back ; for being much better acquainted with the ways and workings of wine than of women, he expected to find the widow either lying prostrate in hysteric spasms or preparing in indignant fury to wreak her utmost vengeance upon his devoted head. But as he looked back, to his utter and absolute astonishment he saw the widow still erect upon the steps, and standing as straight as a bird in a rainy day ; while, instead of flying at him, as he expected, she smiled sweetly and said, " You need not be in such a hurry — will you walk in ? " But Marine trembled so badly that he dared not speak for fear of his voice betraying him ; so he was suddenly seized with a violent cough, and, after getting somewhat composed, walked back and laughingly pretended that his late " flying off at a tangent " was but a joke.

It was so late that Marine, considering her invitation more a matter of form than reality, excused himself for the present, saying that " he would call soon ; " " Very soon," said the widow ; and with mutual " Good nights " they separated.

So excited was Marine that, on his way back, he rather ran or flew than walked ; and as he bounded along he ejaculated, " Egad ! nothing ' suspicious ' there. Those lips were a good many degrees warmer than ghosts' lips.

No mistake about that, any how." And even after he retired to rest his slumbers were broken by restless tossings and rolling ; and towards morning he awoke himself and the other inmates of the house by singing out in a stentorian voice, "Don't give up the ship! Helm a-lee! hard down! Man the pumps, and we'll keep her from sinking yet!"

CHAPTER XIII.

PAUGUS BATTLE SO CALLED. — DEATH OF PAUGUS AND BLACK FISH. —
CHOCORUA MADE CHIEF.

THE next day after the party at Squire Langdell's Wenane, the son of Chocorua, of the Pequawketts, of which tribe Paugus was chief sachem, and who, as the reader will recollect, aided Rozella in her flight from the attack of Taurus, Janus, and the Indians in the forest, and afterwards saved her life at the garrison, called at the squire's house.

Chocorua had a lodge in the forest, not far from the settlement of which Squire Langdell's location was the centre; and at the close of every Indian war, after the treaty was made and the pipe of peace smoked, he came and resided at this place, which for some reason he preferred to the territory upon and between the head waters of the lake and Pequawkett.

At this time Laconia was deluged in blood; Indian wars and massacres were breaking out in almost every part of New Hampshire, from Charlestown Number Four to Lower Ashuelot, Pennacook, and Suncook, and the tribe of the Pequawketts had been down the river on their murderous mission. They were now expecting a visit of retaliation from the "white dogs," as they termed the English; and Wenane had come to inform Rozella and her friends that they might make preparation against the

awful tornado, should another desolating blast sweep the already bloodstained borders of Laconia.

The appalling intelligence came to the hearts of its inhabitants, already nearly crushed by their heavy burdens, like the knell of departed hope. So severely had Rozella Langdell and Britton Waldron suffered, when of late separated from each other, that they had resolved nevermore to be parted except it were necessary for the welfare of their beloved country. Of the truth of the information imparted by Wenane there could be no doubt; for he had ever shown himself a true and unswerving friend, and by his kind acts and general good conduct had not only grown into the favor and esteem of Rozella and her friends, but was also a favorite with the settlers generally.

From him they learned that the great Paugus had with his tribe retired to Pequawkett; and thinking it would better conduce to the safety of their wives and children to be the assailants rather than the assailed, they resolved "to carry the war into Africa," and attack them on their own ground.

They had now been for a week in active preparation for another Indian war, which they dreaded and would gladly have avoided, when word came that Massachusetts had offered a bounty of one hundred pounds for every Indian scalp that should be brought in. They also learned that Captain John Lovewell, of Dunstable, who with a company of forty men had swept the Indian country the previous year, was ready to march in pursuit of Paugus and his bloody warriors, and that the force he had raised would be sufficient to meet the enemy. Therefore most of the settlers of Laconia decided upon remaining at home, to provide for their own families; and it may be that a few thought their heads much safer upon their own pillows than in the wild borders of the Pequawketts.

But not so with Britton Waldron, whose bravery had been too often and too severely tested to allow room for doubt on that point. Owing to the powerful attraction in the vicinity of Squire Langdell's, he now needed little persuasion to stay at home ; and as Rozella had used that little, and perhaps an overplus, he had consented to remain.

But the widow Lee, having a kind of presentiment that at no very distant day the craft of Marine and her own would lie side by side in the snug harbor of matrimony, and wishing that the reputation for courage of the man she was to marry should be fully established previous to the union, had given him some sly hints about his want of courage ; whereupon he resolved to assist in the contemplated attack upon the enemies of his adopted country, that he might thereby be counted worthy of it and also of the hand of the charming widow. His resolution meeting the approval of the widow, he got his toggery on board, and was now ready to weigh anchor, clear the port, and set sail for Pequawkett.

Robert Vaughan, who at the time of the massacre at Coheco was at Little Harbor, thinking it was necessary that he should take a part in the coming contest, in order to bring himself up to the level of those who had so bravely fought at that place, also determined to join Captain Lovewell's company, and under his command proceed to the theatre of action. They therefore gave the parting hand to their friends, and started for Fort Point to meet the brave Lovewell or await his arrival.

Fort Point was on a neck of land on the extreme right of Merry Meeting Bay. Upon this neck of land and by the side of the fort stood then and still stands a majestic pine, upon which the colonists were wont to raise their flagstaff whenever they marched into its vicinity to meet their savage foes. And the same old iron staples, corroded and eaten with rust, by which they fastened the flag-

staff to its trunk, still remain to be seen as relics which our fathers have left behind them to remind their descendants of their heroic bravery in subduing a land thickly beset with treacherous, lurking foes and armed bands of outlying savages.

It was this place that Robert Vaughan and Marine, together with a few others, had reached, to await the arrival of Lovewell and his men. The great war path of the northern tribes lay along the eastern shore of Lake Winnipiseogee and thence along the Cocheco valley; therefore, in proceeding to Pequawkett, Lovewell's company must necessarily pass this point. He arrived the next day, to the great joy of Vaughan and his friends; but one of his men had fallen sick; and when they reached the point the captain made a halt to provide for the sick man, and also to make Fort Point more secure in case the overpowering force of the enemy should compel them to resort to it. At this place they left the sick soldier, Mr. Benjamin Kidder, and also a sergeant and several others for his better protection.

Notwithstanding the additions Lovewell had received from the valley of the Cocheco, he had less than forty men when he left Fort Point. They now took the Indian path and proceeded directly towards Pequawkett. They reached Saco Pond the first night, some fifteen miles from the place of their destination, where they encamped. During the night they fancied they heard the Indians about the camp; and Chamberlain, one of the bravest of the band, on alarming the company, found it so dark without that nothing could be seen, as a man and a tree could not be distinguished the one from the other. But the night passed; and no attack being made, they supposed their fears to have been groundless. The next morning, while the chaplain of the company, Jonathan Frye, was praying that they might be shown the enemy for whose destruc-

tion they had undertaken their weary and toilsome march, and had not yet finished his petition, the report of a gun rang over the water and echoed back from the surrounding forest. On looking in the direction of the report they discovered a solitary Indian standing on a point of land which ran out into the pond. They now expected an immediate attack, as they supposed the design of the firing of the gun and discovering himself by the Indian was to draw them into a battle.

A hasty consultation was now held to decide whether it would be prudent with so limited a number of men to risk a battle with so formidable an enemy as Paugus and his brave warriors. Captain Lovewell, Farwell, Lieutenant Jonathan Robbins, Chamberlain, Robert Vaughan, and the bold Marine were all advocates for a battle.

"We came in search of the enemy," said they; "and we have just prayed to God that we might find them; and we had rather trust in Providence for our lives — yea, or die if need be — than, by returning without even seeing them, to subject ourselves to the imputation of cowardice."

An advance was now agreed upon, and Captain Lovewell gave the command for the soldiers to lay down their knapsacks, and proceed with the utmost caution and in perfect readiness for an attack.

When they had marched about a mile and a half, Ensign Wyman espied an Indian coming towards them; whereupon he gave the signal previously agreed upon, and every soldier threw himself upon the ground and awaited his approach. When he had arrived sufficiently near, several guns were discharged at him, when he fired in return and mortally wounded Captain Lovewell, and then fell himself. They now, supposing that the Indians were in front of them, and that he who had fallen had, like a second Roman Curtius, devoted himself to death to save his country, hastily returned for their packs, and to defend

themselves as best they might. But the horror they felt may be better imagined than described when, on reaching the spot where they had left them, they saw them in the hands of a band of Indian warriors of twice their own number.

As they came nearer to their exultant foes, who stood over their packs with such a fiendish and diabolical grin upon their painted faces as only an Indian can give, it may well be supposed that they were, to say the least, somewhat disconcerted. They now stood face to face with the savages, neither party firing, and exchanged mutual glances of burning hate and deadly hostility.

While the negotiations for treaties of peace between the Indians and the English, so frequently made and broken, were pending, many of both parties who had stood in battle array against each other, now, burying the hatchet and smoking the pipe of peace, became familiarly acquainted. Of these were some on both sides of the now opposing forces. The Indians saw and knew the brave but now wounded Lovewell, Farwell, Chamberlain, Wyman, and others; who, in turn, saw the mighty sachem Paugus, who on this occasion presented a most frightful appearance, being dressed in a huge bearskin, and bands of fur about his legs, with his wampum and battle axe at his side, his gun in his hand, and his keen knife in his belt; while upon his head was a broad belt of wolfskin, full of the feathers of the hawk and eagle.

By his side stood the renowned Wahwa, in a dress no less frightful and terrific.

There, too, was the lamb in peace, but lion in war, the dreaded Chocorua, and others of less note, to the number of about eighty fierce and bloodthirsty savages, who thus cut off their retreat, and now stood with looks and gestures of determined and deadly hostility between themselves and their only avenue of escape.

Then Paugus set up that awful howl which he alone was capable of giving in its most terrific style ; for, in the words of a poet of that day, —

“ As runs the fox would Paugus run ;
As howls the wolf would Paugus howl.”

The brave little band of English had now walked within a few yards of their foes ; and as Paugus ceased his howling war song the command was given, and both parties fired at one and the same time. The Indians overshot their mark ; but the balls of the English did awful execution. As they fell, both dying and living set up the dreadful howl of vengeance and despair. The savages, having about twice the number of the English, still had a sufficient force to outnumber their antagonists, and now drove them over the rocks to the shore of the pond. When they could retreat no farther, but stood, still facing their relentless pursuers, and hemmed in by the water on one side and their enemies on the other, then the savages commenced their hideous “ powwows,” yelling and howling like wolves and barking like dogs, until the wild woods echoed and reëchoed with the infernal din, and it seemed as if all pandemonium had broken loose at once.

Then followed the additional “ powwowing,” which was only performed on unusual occasions like the present, such as striking on the ground and performing a thousand feats of “ ground and lofty tumbling,” of which those of the circus give but a faint idea.

Ensign Wyman and the intrepid Marine now levelled their pieces and fired, and the leaders of this infernal powwowing, Wahwa and one of his comrades, fell, and the fiendish cotillon broke up.

The Indians now held up pieces of rope, which they had brought to bind their captives, and called upon the English to lay down their arms and surrender.

"Never!" shouted Chamberlain and Wyman. "Never!" echoed Vaughan and Marine.

The guns of both parties had by this time become so foul as to be unserviceable.

"Now," cried Paugus to Chamberlain, "if the white dog will not surrender, let us wash out our guns in the lake, and he who gets his piece cleaned first will have the first fire."

"Agreed," replied Chamberlain; and both sprang for the water, Paugus in the mean time shouting to Chamberlain, "It is you and I; it is you and I."

"Ay," responded Chamberlain; "it is you and I, sure enough."

Neither seemed to gain upon the other in washing out and swabbing his piece, and both loaded and returned the ramrods to their places at the same moment; when at this instant Chamberlain, looking up, saw Paugus raising his powder horn to prime his piece, and, quick as thought, giving his gun a smart blow upon the side, thereby causing it to prime, he brought it to his shoulder; and as Paugus, thinking himself ahead, exultingly cried out, "White dog no prime," crack went his piece, and the great sachem fell dead at his feet.

Before Paugus fell, Marine, who had got behind a large rock, had shot three Indians. He would put his hat upon a stick and raise it above the rock until the bullet of an Indian whistled through it, when, letting it drop, as the savage ran up for his scalp he would drop him.

Vaughan, too, had done good execution from a cleft rock. He first shot an Indian near it, and, while the attention of all was absorbed by their personal and individual encounters, dragged him into the cleft, and placed him upright at the entrance, where the space between the rocks was just narrow enough to retain him; then placing his gun in his hands, as though he were yet alive, he fired over his shoulder. From this novel breastwork he dis-

charged his piece with unerring aim, the redskins supposing all the while that it was one of their own braves, who was bringing down a paleface at every shot.

But when the report of Chamberlain's death-dealing gun was heard, and the mighty Paugus, the most renowned warrior of all the mountain tribes, was seen to fall and struggle like the dying wolf in the agonies of death, then did the savages set up a howl so despairing that the woods and hills seemed by their mournful echoes to be vocal with the shrieks of demons and the awful wailings of their doomed victims.

The English now charged upon their terror-stricken foes, who retreated to the woods, closely pursued by their bold assailants, and a new order of combat was presented. Reports of guns were more frequent than before, and the shrill whistling of balls startled the ear, while bark flew and boughs fell in every direction. As the Indians were now fighting in their own peculiar and favorite manner, the English were compelled to adopt the same tactics, and, like them, dodge from tree to tree, discharging their pieces at whatever part of the person of the foe might be visible. Marine and Vaughan had both been wounded, but still fought as unflinchingly as ever.

Marine again tried his former stratagem of projecting his hat from one side of the tree behind which he stood, and again did the well-aimed bullet pass through it; while the redskin who had fired the shot sprang hastily for another tree to see if his shot had taken effect, but never reached it; for he had scarcely taken three leaps when Marine's swift-winged messenger of death passed through his breast, and, leaping high in the air, he fell dead.

Vaughan had darted from tree to tree at one side of the battle ground to get sight at those in front; and as he flew to a large pine, a powerful and muscular savage was also making for the same tree.

Both reached it at the same time and both fired at the same instant ; but in their mutual eagerness for each other's destruction, neither brought his gun to a level, and thus both overshot. Dashing their guns to the ground they drew their knives, and for a few moments looked upon each other with mutual hate, neither daring to avert his eye or turn around, lest his adversary's knife should be buried in his back.

Then the Indian gave one terrific whoop, and both struck fiercely and furiously, and brightly flashed the fiery sparks from their clashing knives. At this instant the quick eye of the cunning savage caught sight of a root at their feet from under which the earth had been gullied by the rains, and instantly bounded back. As he did so, Vaughan sprang forward for another thrust, when his foot tripped in the root, as the Indian had supposed it would, and he fell prostrate upon his face.

But this trap was not destined to be the means of his capture ; for the moment he struck the ground he darted between the Indian's feet, and the descending knife of the redskin, aimed at his body, fell upon and slightly wounded one of his legs.

The savage, as he struck, followed his own weapon, and fell prostrate on the ground. He sprang like lightning to his feet, but only to meet his adversary's knife, whose long blade passed between his ribs, near his backbone, and pierced his heart.

Ensign Wyman, meanwhile, was engaged in a singular combat with a long specimen of the Indian species, called Black Fish ; who, with the agility of a fish, glided from tree to tree, to whose giant trunks his own massive proportions were little inferior. Like Vaughan, Black Fish had passed round the opposite flank of the little band, and for a like purpose. But, unfortunately for himself, he struck a snag so far down the stream that he could not

turn his long length to again stem the opposing current. This snag was a large tree which had been uprooted by the wind, and in its fall taken up upon its roots a large patch of earth. Behind this patch lay Wyman, with his long Dead Shot, as he termed his piece, peeling the bark from off the trees in his vicinity and occasionally tanning a red-skin. As he dealt a powerful blow at a distant hemlock, and peeled the bark from off both the tree and the peeping redskin behind it, he felt the gravel rattling down upon him from the rim of the patch above his head, and, looking up, saw the projecting eagle's feathers, which he knew denoted the close proximity of Black Fish.

The next moment the long gun of the savage came over the roots, almost touching his head ; but he sprang aside, and its contents were buried in the ground at his feet. Wyman had seen Lieutenant Robbins and Robert Usher fall before the same murderous weapon ; and, full in the determination that it should not be the means of taking the lives of any more of his friends, he seized and wrested it from his enemy's grasp.

Neither dared run for fear of being taken at a disadvantage and despatched by the other. Wyman had reloaded his gun, but dared not discharge it at a distant foe for fear of the assault of his nearer neighbor, though not exactly friend ; and thus for some time they remained within a foot or two of each other, though neither could see the other.

But Wyman, though not an Indian, had more ingenuity than the savage. He cautiously commenced digging out the sand from between the roots of the fallen tree ; and as he approached the upper surface some of the sand fell upon the other side, as Wyman had intended. The bait took ; and as Black Fish, seeing the dirt fall, and supposing Wyman's attention still occupied in enlarging the hole, applied his eye to it, a ball from Dead Shot whizzed

through his brain ; and with one screech of mortal agony he rolled heavily off the log and expired.

Chamberlain, since the fall of Paugus, had been singled out by all the Indians as an object of their special vengeance, though they were careful to keep out of his way ; and he could induce no redskin to engage in a hand-to-hand encounter. But the balls flew thick and fast about him ; and he received many and severe wounds, though fortunately none proved mortal.

After Black Fish had fallen, Chocorua, who was now in command, gave the order to retreat ; and the Indians, giving one terrific yell, dashed into the woods and disappeared.

"Now," said Lieutenant Robbins, as he lay mortally wounded upon the ground, "charge my gun and leave it by my side ; and when the Indians come in the morning for my scalp, I will despatch one more if I can."

Of the Indians it is supposed not more than twenty out of the eighty escaped unwounded, while the English also were badly cut up. Three or four of their number they were obliged to leave behind in a dying condition ; and eleven more of the wounded, together with eight or ten who were unwounded, started for Fort Point, some dying upon the way and the remainder reaching the fort. When they arrived there they found it entirely deserted ; all of its inmates, including even the sick soldier, had gone. It was ultimately ascertained that, when they were first attacked by the Indians, one of their men proved a coward and left the field, and, on reaching Fort Point, had reported that the English were entirely cut off ; whereupon all hastened back to their homes.

Marine and Vaughan, with the other brave heroes, passed the night at the fort, and the next morning took the path down the Cocheco valley to the settlements of Laconia ; while Chamberlain and the remains of his gal-

lant band proceeded down the Indian war path to Con-toocook, and thence to Dunstable.

The morning following Chamberlain's arrival at his house in Dunstable, on looking from his window, he discovered the head of an Indian projecting over the top of the wood pile in front of the house, with his gun pointed and aimed at the door of his dwelling to shoot him as he should open it. He immediately cut a small hole in the door, and with the same gun with which he brought down the mighty Paugus now sent a ball through the head of his son, who, to avenge his father's death, had followed thus closely on his destroyer's track.

Thus terminated the expedition against the Pequawketts. They had received a blow from which they never recovered; and the main body of the tribe soon left that section of country, and, locating upon the southern and eastern banks of the Connecticut River, joined the tribe under the great warrior Philip. The few Pequawketts who remained in the vicinity of Ossipee and Lake Winnipiseogee chose Chocorua for their chief, who, having made a treaty of friendship with the English, buried the tomahawk and smoked the pipe of peace.

CHAPTER XIV.

DOLLY PLOT HAS ANOTHER INTERVIEW WITH HER ASSOCIATES. — THE
DUTCHMAN OF THE BUCK'S HORN INN AND THE TRAVELLER.

"'Tis nine o'clock ; the candle burns slowly, and the flame shoots up in a strange and suspicious manner. I'll lay my bridle out in full view, and 'twill serve as a dun for my dues. Ah, there are two flames at the top of the wick, and one of them is blue. Yes, they will come ; but I see by the blue flame that one of them brings bad news. There goes a winding sheet down the wick. Horrors ! Some one of my friends will die or leave me soon. Tab, too, walks the floor, instead of settling in the corner watching the shimmering coals ; and now he looks up at the ceiling. Yes, something will fall upon me heavily, for he looks troubled. Pan also holds his ear to the door and snuffs at its chinks. But a spark shoots from the burning wick — a present, then, I am to have ; so there is some good coming with the bad.

"But I wish they would come and take these clothes from my table ; besides, it is cold without to-night, and Taurus will need his cap and coat, and Janus his hat and frock. 'Twas cruel in me — wasn't it, Tab ? — to treat my friends so. But 'twas the whiskey that chippered so cheerily in the canteen that was most to be blamed. But they meant me no harm ; and if I only knew where to find them, I would go to-night and carry them their cloth-

ing. I must keep on the right side of them, for I have no friends to spare. I wish the five crowns had been melted into bullets to shoot witches with before I had demanded them. What are rusty, cold crowns compared to warm friends like them?"

At this moment a loud rap was heard at the door, and in stumbled the objects of Dolly Plot's soliloquy. As she rolled to the door, and in great delight held out her hand to the foremost of the brace, the worthy Taurus, she came in violent collision with his burly frame, which, with the impetus it had acquired in coming against the door, could not stop, but pitched directly against her and fell heavily to the floor.

Janus, who was not quite so much intoxicated as his companion, dashed at his head to raise him up; but by the time he had reached him Pan had seized him by his boots, and with numerous and powerful jerks was endeavoring to induce him to back out of his position. Dolly and Taurus were shouting "Murder!" at the top of their voices; Janus bellowing "Get out!" Pan replying "Yes! yes!" in quick yelps, as he attempted to drag him out in obedience to his mistress's profane outcries; while Tab, in his fright mistaking the looking glass for the window, smashed into it with headlong fury and fell stunned to the floor, with the glass top of him, but, quickly recovering, at the next leap went through the window, scattering the fragments in all directions, and disappearing in the darkness without.

"Mine horror! mine horror!" ejaculated the little Dutchman of the Buck's Horn Inn, who came in at this juncture with a traveller who was to be lodged at the Buck's Horn; "it ish murter, zure enough;" at the same time catching Taurus by the shoulders to raise him up. Dick sprang for some weapon of defence, and the first thing he laid hold of was Dolly's folded bridle, which was

lying upon one of the highbacked chairs. But as he turned around, the dog had left Taurus and flew at the little fat Dutchman, who roared out so lustily that the frightened animal turned from him and dashed out at the open door. Taurus was just attempting to rise when Janus threw the bridle over his head and informed the witch that her horse was groomed and bridled and good for the twenty-mile heat.

The day's debauch of Taurus had filled his head not only with the fumes of rum but also with such a pressure of blood that when he fell his nose bled profusely, from the effects of which all in the room had suffered. Even Dolly presented a most frightful and pitiful appearance. The high crown of her cap now trailed upon her back, covered with dust and blood; her face and dress were also bloody and torn, her comb broken, and her eyes glaring frightfully in the flitting blaze of the fire. Her looks bore ample testimony to her late soliloquy, "No friends to spare."

"I zay," asked the Dutchman of Taurus, "vot te tuyfel all dish ere mean?"

"You just mind your own damn business," hickuped Taurus in maudlin tones.

"The brute is drunk," said Dolly, snatching the bridle from off his neck and flinging it behind the door.

"Drunk — eh?" replied Taurus. "No gentleman's drunk's long's he can sit in his saddle and hold a tight rein — eh?"

"I have seen enough of this place," said the now disgusted traveller, "and have no wish to remain to have my fortune told by such a pitiful-looking object as she," — at the same time looking at aunt Dolly, — "and I will return to the inn."

"Mine Cot!" said the Dutchman; "I tink we have zeen enough myself — yas, blaanty enough; so to de Puck's Horn Inn it ish."

"To-morrow night," cried Dolly, "I shall be better prepared to receive company who may wish to consult me professionally."

As they passed out into the entry to leave the house the Dutchman suddenly bawled out, as he stumbled over something in the passage, —

"Vot te tuyfel ish here?"

"O, nothing," replied Janus, "but the carcass of a sheep we bought at the upper settlement and have brought for a present to aunt Dolly."

"Py tam," said the Dutchman, holding the skin in which it was rolled up to the light, "he pe mine own plack zheep, mit de vite leg; and I vill have ze rascals who kill mine zheep took up in de morning and try pefore Squire Langtale, and zee vat mercy you gatch vill pe round de neck mit de halter."

Both Taurus and Janus now sprang to the door and solemnly averred that they had bought the sheep from a man whom they met on the road from the Upper Plantation; but both the Dutchman and the traveller had left, and only Tab and Pan were to be seen as they skulked back into the house.

By this time the loss of blood and the fright occasioned by the discovery of the Dutchman had sobered the muddled brain of Taurus to such a degree that he could talk quite coherently again; and Dolly had washed the blood from her face sufficiently to be enabled to see through to the light; while Janus was engaged in collecting and removing the broken glass which was scattered in all directions over the floor.

"Now," asked Jack Taurus, "what is to be done?"

"Pay me the five crowns," replied Dolly, "and also for the glass you have broken."

"The crowns," replied Taurus, "I have not got; but here," said he, drawing a valuable watch from his pocket,

"is something worth ten crowns, ready money, which I obtained to-day of a man at the Upper Settlement at the game of brag."

"And here," added Janus, going to the door, "is some mutton we have brought you as a present."

"I knew," cried Dolly, "that I should have one, for I saw it in the candle ; and I knew, too, that something was to befall me, but had no idea it was to be caused by this drunken intruder."

"No joking," said Taurus ; "for we must leave this place to-night, or we shall have the officers upon us in the morning."

"Whither ? " asked Dolly.

"To the trapper's camp, up the mountain," was the reply. "The company leaves to-morrow ; and we had agreed to go to-day, but did not expect to leave in such haste. Squire Langdell knows that I am determined to obtain and marry the Forest Queen, either by fair means or foul ; and he would show me no mercy were I to be brought before him for trial."

"O," answered Dolly, "do not go. I will still help you to obtain Rozella, and I will give the Dutchman the watch in pay for the sheep ; so that all will be well again."

"The Dutchman," rejoined Taurus, "will take nothing but our hides in pay for his black sheep we have stolen. We have found a cave in the mountain," continued he, "where even an Indian could not discover us, and no human foot but our own has ever trod its granite floor. We may stop there for a day or two, and then go on with the company to trap the beaver by the streams and ponds at the foot of the mountain. Perhaps, after we are gone, the Dutchman, who is a great lover of money, may settle it for the watch when he finds he can get nothing else. If so, as some of the company will surely call on Dolly Plot on their journey to the mountains, you must write a line to

that effect ; and when we return we will settle up all scores, both old and new, and be fast friends again."

"I shall certainly do so," replied Dolly, "and will do my best to bring about a settlement."

"Meantime," added Taurus, "keep an eye upon the lovely Rozella ; and if Waldron is dropped off by an Indian or leaves the place, be sure you let me know at once."

"All of that, and more, too," replied Dolly, "I shall do for you ; so good night ;" and the worthy brace departed.

CHAPTER XV.

LACONIA AT EARLY SPRING TIME. — PEACE. — THE NERVOUS MAN TURNS OUT TO BE THE FAMOUS JOHN PUDDINGTON, THE WITCH HUNTER. — HIS APPLICATION TO SQUIRE LANGDELL FOR A WARRANT FOR DOLLY PLOT. — GEORGE WHITEFIELD APPEARS IN LACONIA.

'Tis early spring — the joyous time of year
When from the guiltless breast gloom flies,
And swelling hopes and prospects cheer the mind.
The drifts of winter and the frosts of earth
Give way before its onward march, and fly
To vap'ry mists beneath its genial smile.
From out the tangled thickets of the groves
The merry songster ventures forth, and pipes
His thrilling prelude to the summer's symphony ;
While in the silent woods, with whirring wings,
The partridge's rolling drumbeat marks the hour,
And solaces its mate's maternal cares.

BUT never before had spring come with hopes so bright and prospects so cheering as now upon the young and growing settlement of Laconia. The powerful tribes of Indians both at the east and north had been conquered and dispersed, while the remnant of the main body had nearly all left the country, and the few who remained had sued for peace and buried the bloody tomahawk.

Rozella Langdell had, since the time of her recapture, grown still lovelier, and Britton Waldron still more devoted. He had listened to the thrilling notes of her entrancing voice ; he had ridden by her side over the precip-

itous hills and strolled with her in the budding groves ; and they had not only talked of love, but had felt its fervor and its power.

Elsie Tufton was now in perfect health and the constant companion of Rozella, to whom she had become endeared, not only by similarity of tastes and dispositions, but by a thousand little kindnesses and favors, which, though small, were none the less acceptable.

Marine had returned from the "Paugus fight," as it was termed, with all his blushing honors thick upon him, and his head towered as high in the atmosphere of military glory as any of the brave heroes of Laconia. And the widow Lee — ay, the lovely widow Lee — had received him with open arms on his return from the bloody field of fight, and welcomed him to their mutual home. They had now been husband and wife but one short week ; and although it was but spring elsewhere, 'twas more like summer at Mr. and Mrs. Lee's ; for be it known that, as it was not uncommon in those days for the husband to take his wife's name, Marine had added to his name that of his wife, and was now known as Marine Lee. He became one of the most prominent men in the settlement, and one to whom the settlers looked for counsel and assistance in every time of trial or danger.

As the spring opened and the news of their triumphant victories and successful treaties had gone abroad, the colony rapidly increased in numbers, and scarcely a day passed but some new settler arrived and located within the borders of Laconia ; and for the two years next succeeding this peace the sound of the woodman's axe and the crash of the falling trees up by the shores of Winnipiscogee and onward towards the Crystal Hills had been substituted for the deafening report of the old queen's arms and the whistling whirl of the Indian's tomahawk. Cochorua, and his son, the noble Wenane had returned to

their lodge in one of the beautiful groves of Laconia. The old chief was somewhat morose in the little intercourse he held with the white settlers ; but his battle axe slept more quietly than it seemed possible it should after having been so baptized in blood and carnage.

He possessed a great fund of knowledge of Indian traditions and legends, and was also well versed in the details of the wars between his people and the English, almost every occurrence of which was to be found posted up on the leger of his remarkable memory. As Cochorua had no wife nor squaws connected with his lodge, Wenane still remained with him, although he would have much preferred to adopt the habits and customs of the English. The blood of the bear and the deer, the wolf and the otter, satiated his thirst for the crimson gore ; and when he was not in the forests trapping and hunting, he made frequent and friendly visits to the settlements, where he found ready purchasers for his game and furs.

In the mean time it had been ascertained that the nervous man with the twinkling eye, who had disappeared so suddenly at the conclusion of the sailor's narrative of the phantom ship, was the famous John Puddington, a professed witch hunter. He had met Taurus and Janus at the Upper Plantation the day following their frightful experience at fortune telling at the hut of Dolly Plot, and had learned from them that she was a real, *bona fide* witch. He had returned to Squire Langdell's, as the widow Lee had predicted, with both eyes open, and reported to Rozella and her father the facts he had ascertained. He declared that, in the presence of Jack Taurus and Dick Janus, the old hag had assumed the identical form and body of a monstrous black cat ; that she had burned both their hands by the door key ; that she had filled Jack's mouth with pins, and wound up by mounting the broom-

stick and riding round the room at a rate decidedly inside of 2.40.

The squire and Rozella laughed heartily at his wondrous recital ; whereupon John dropped the weak eyelid again and appeared much surprised.

"What is to be done with her?" asked John.

"Let her remain as she is," replied Rozella, "if she has bewitched nobody but these worthy gentlemen."

"Why let her remain," pursued John, "if she is capable of doing so much mischief in the settlement?"

"Because," replied Rozella, "it seems by that act that she is capable of doing at least one commendable deed as well as numerous bad ones ; and I would spare her on the same principle that the farmers adopt when they suffer the kingbird, who eats their bees, to live, because he drives away the hawk from the pursuit of the young chickens, and destroys the caterpillar upon the tender trees."

"I can't exactly keep the run of that roundabout sort of argument," replied John, "and I want a plain yes or no. Now, I demand of Squire Langdell that he issue a warrant for her arrest ; and I will bring her before him forthwith, and have her tried, condemned, and hanged as a witch."

The squire, as well as his daughter, laughed again most merrily, but, to John Puddington, most provokingly.

"I should laugh louder yet," said Rozella, "to see my good father sitting perched up there in the east room, with a silly old woman before him on trial for her life for being a witch."

"And why not your good father?" persisted John. "The most learned judges and the greatest men in Massachusetts are this day sitting on the bench, trying and hanging silly old women, as you term them, for being witches."

"The greater the judge," retorted the squire, "the greater the fool. And although I heartily wish Dolly Plot and her associates were beyond the borders of our loved Laconia, yet, if she does not leave until she feels a tight rope by virtue of a warrant of my drawing, she will live and disgrace our fair soil for many a month to come."

So John Puddington, the man with the twinkling eye, left, despairing of getting a warrant from the squire ; but that nervous eye would still twinkle, and the other still shut only on extraordinary occasions. The next they heard of him was in Portsmouth, at the celebrated trial of Goodwife Walford. She was brought before the Court of Assistants on complaint of one Susannah Trimmings, and the testimony of a number of witnesses was gravely laid before the court, of all the strange sights and sounds they had seen and heard, the balls of fire with which they had been smitten, of old ladies turned into cats and going mousing about their neighbors' premises, or taking moonlight excursions on broomsticks and other equally strange steeds whose pedigree is unknown. But to the honor of Laconia be it said, not one was hung ; while in Massachusetts they were hanged by scores. And in the then little town of Salem twenty innocent old "mediums," if, indeed, they were equal to their successors of the present day and worthy of the name, were "hung by the neck till they were dead."

Soon after this another malignant epidemic swept over Laconia, entitled "religious intolerance." Quaker women were persecuted for their belief and publicly whipped in the streets of Dover. In one instance, in the depths of winter, the constables were ordered to strip three delicate and feeble women and tie them to the tail of a cart for merely believing and carrying into practice their peculiar doctrines. The cart was then to be driven through eleven towns, or about eighty miles, and the women were to receive ten stripes apiece in each town.

During the two years of cessation from Indian hostilities there came to Laconia the most eloquent man, with the exception, perhaps, of Patrick Henry, that was ever heard on the western continent. This was no other than George Whitefield, a name sacredly embalmed in the religious remembrances of thousands of the American people. He was of humble origin, and had no ancient and aristocratic genealogy to swell his fame or give him a favorable introduction. But his words not only cut the way for his mission, but cut, like a two-edged sword, deep into the hearts of his hearers.

His silvery tones awoke the groves of Laconia; and where blood was wont to run peace flowed like a river, and mercy like gushing streams and fountains. And as the silvery mists encircle the mountain's sides, so did the enchanting spell of his matchless oratory cling to the bold, brave heart of the rough mountaineer.

The enthusiastic explorer of the unending beauties of Nature, who marched by the majestic music of the purling waterfall in search of some new delight, heard the rippling drops of liquid eloquence, and felt a strange and mystic swell within his own heart, as if some spiritual cascade had suddenly burst out in some of its hitherto unexplored recesses, to which the brightest charms of external scenes were but as vanity. And the admirer of Nature in her tamer and more quiet aspects, whose chief delight was in "rural sights and rural sounds," left his gayest and most favorite warbler, as he swung upon the topmost branch of some bending willow with the most thrilling variations still gurgling from his reedy throat, and in the simple cadence of his fervid tones, fresh from the heart, forgot e'en Nature's sweetest choristers; for a "still small voice" whispered of angel tones on golden harps celestial.

Even the lighthearted maiden, whose tripping foot scarce crushed the flower upon which it trod, and who

roamed with the bee and the butterfly from "morn to dewy eve," left her busy companion, coated with his yellow, waxen fleece, to swing and wave among the odors of the ripening strawberry, or blow his tiny trumpet from out the velvet flower bells of the morning glory; for sweeter notes and more heavenly strains have swept the chords of her young heart, and awakened her soul with its diapason of immortal harmony.

All business of a secular nature was suspended; the shops and stores of the villagers were closed; the merchant forgot his ledger to look after his spiritual dividends; and the accountant was only anxious to ascertain the sum total of his hopes of eternal life.

The sailor furled his canvas and left his ship, chafing restlessly at the wharf, to learn of Him who walked upon the waves and spoke their foaming surges into peace. How worthless and unprofitable seemed their own marvellous and exaggerated narrations when compared with the simple story of the youthful Nazarene—a story which a child can tell, and to which a sage can add nothing! The simple rehearsal of the birth, life, and death of the Babe of Bethlehem, the Reconciler of man unto God and the Savior of the world, carries upon its sweet accents of mercy a melting pathos which subdues and soothes all human hearts and wins them back to heaven.

How striking the contrast between this and the dry technicalities and acute subtleties of some modern theologian, who, cramped and fettered by his narrow creed and sectarian bigotry, has so hedged up the way of life that when hungry souls ask for bread he can only give them a stone upon which to grind their teeth and martyrize their nerves, and from whose granite crumbs even the starving soul revolts, and is ready to faint and die for want of that "bread of life" of which our Father's house has enough and to spare!

Thus did Whitefield, with spiritual ploughshare, break up the religious greensward of Laconia, and upon the fertile soil strew the perennial seed of faith and good works, which still sends up a rich and abundant harvest.

That timorous maiden whom neither Ralle nor all his savage coadjutors, with their torturing racks and heavy chains, could intimidate or subdue, — even the fair Rozella, — with all her friends, joined the crowds that thronged around him, and learned, and loved, and lingered at his feet.

CHAPTER XVI.

MEETING OF THE MOUNTAIN RANGERS ON THE EVE OF THEIR DEPARTURE TO CAPE BRETON. — ROZELLA PRESENTS THEM A BANNER. — HER SPEECH AND ITS RECEPTION. — ROZELLA'S SONG.

THE royal families of France and Spain were, at this time, connected by the tie of relationship. But Spain did not possess the stern integrity and dauntless valor she once exhibited to the world under her chivalrous leader, Don Roderic, the last of the Gothic kings, when overrun by her Arabian invaders ; and ever since the feud which had broke out between Britain and Spain, it had been expected that France would be involved in the quarrel. If such should be the case, the American colonies must necessarily be included in the scene of hostilities. These anticipations were soon realized. England did, indeed, declare war against France ; and Duquesnel, the French governor of Louisburg, who received the intelligence before it reached New England, with a large body of men surprised the English garrison at Canso. He not only destroyed the fort and other buildings, but also the English fisheries and posts in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland ; and with sixty prisoners of war returned to Louisburg, a city two miles and a quarter in circumference, surrounded by a wall of stone thirty-six feet in height and a ditch eighty feet in width.

It is situated on a neck of land on the bleak and rocky

Island of Cape Breton. There is no vegetation brought to perfection in summer upon its sterile shores ; for it is wrapped in perpetual fog, which is impervious to the most powerful rays of the sun.

This early disaster, by the attack of Duquesnel, drew the attention of the colonists to the importance of getting possession of Louisburg ; and its reduction was undertaken in genuine Yankee spirit. The prisoners at Canso were finally sent to Boston on parole ; and from them Governor Shirley obtained an accurate account of the fortress at Louisburg, and, with his characteristic energy, determined at once upon an enterprise against it. The fishermen at Marblehead, who had been driven from the bay and waters between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, arose at once, and proved to the colonies that they were not marble hearted if they were marble headed.

Massachusetts resolved to join the expedition, and, by a majority of one vote, raised a force of three thousand volunteers. New Hampshire raised a detachment of five hundred men, and Connecticut as many more. Robert Vaughan, who was then in Boston, rode as express to his adopted town, Portsmouth, and rallied the house of representatives, then in session ; and they, catching the enthusiasm, passed a vote to raise men and money for the expedition ; and the morning drum beat the *reveille* to arms. The country round about was then in the midst of one of Whitefield's religious revivals, who, being consulted, exhorted his followers to enlist in the cause of their country ; and so zealously did the new converts rush to arms, that it amounted to little less than one of Fray Antonio Agapida's pious crusades. The officers, too, had added fuel to the flame by shrewdly urging upon the converts the religious duty of destroying the images which adorned the French churches of the island ; and one of the chaplains carried a hatchet with which to cut them down.

Vaughan and other messengers were sent through the neighboring towns; and as the bountiful crops of the year were just harvested, the settlers rejoiced at the welcome summons.

William Pepperell, of Kittery, a merchant of stern integrity and heroic valor, was appointed commander-in-chief; and Meserve received the appointment of colonel of the New Hampshire forces. The towns in the vicinity were appointed for the raising of companies, and Britton Waldron was commissioned captain of the Mountain Rangers. The troops of Massachusetts embarked at Boston; but so ardent for the conflict and impatient of delay were the New Hampshire forces that, at their own request, they were permitted to sail two days in advance of those of Massachusetts. The vessels to transport them to their new and heroic enterprise lay moored in Portsmouth Bay, ready for their embarkation.

Captain Waldron's company, by previous agreement, met, the evening of their departure, at the house of Squire Langdell, and the lovely Rozella presented them a new and splendid banner, upon whose silken folds were tastefully embroidered various mottoes and appropriate devices, wrought by her own skilful hand.

It was early in the evening; and the full moon rose, with her broad, generous face smiling out from beneath the veiling mists upon the horizon's verge, and with a brighter disk than she was wont to wear on minor occasions. The rattling drum summoned the scattered and lingering groups of soldiers from their friends, who had assembled to bid adieu to the brave band, and the company paraded. All hearts were now beating impatiently for the appearance of Rozella; nor were they kept long in suspense; for, as they gazed, the door opened, and the Queen of Hearts as well as of the Forest came forth, accompanied by her friend Elsie Tufton.

At her approach wild and hearty greetings filled the air, and were repeated and returned by a thousand echoes from the distant hills. Never had she appeared so majestically charming. Her dress, though simple, was most tastefully fitted to her elegant form ; and although when she first stepped out upon the hastily-constructed platform she was pale and trembled somewhat, the hearty cheers of the soldiers and the thoughts of her country's previous suffering and its present danger rallied and reassured her, and she soon regained her wonted composure.

She now unrolled the elegantly-wrought banner, and presented it, for the first time, to other eyes than her own. And as of old the angel stood with the golden bow of promise in his hand, extending from heaven the sign and covenant that the earth should nevermore be destroyed by a flood, so to the enthusiastic soldiers below her did Rozella seem an earthly angel, waving over them her banner of promise that the land should nevermore be destroyed by a flood of foes from without or again deluged in blood by treacherous savages within.

All voices were now hushed, but only to break out in wilder and higher strains when the chaplain proclaimed aloud the motto engraved upon the banner — " Nil desperandum, Christo duce ; " i. e., " Despair of nothing, Christ being our leader." Then, advancing to the front of the platform, Rozella, in a clear and musical voice, addressed them as follows : —

" Gentlemen officers and soldiers of the Mountain Rangers : Permit me to congratulate you, the liege subjects of his majesty King William, rightful and lawful sovereign of England, Scotland, and Ireland, upon this our happy meeting on the present auspicious occasion.

" You, who but a short time since barely escaped with your lives from the murderous knife and tomahawk and

flame of the savage foe, while your nearest and dearest friends were hunted down like wild beasts of the forest and slain at your very feet, have ears still open and hearts obedient to the call of your country, that you should engage anew in her service. Brave men like you, my countrymen, need no sordid incentives to impel them to action, for motives of sufficient power are to be found at your own doors. The silent voices of your slaughtered friends and the yet unhealed wounds of the living plead with a hundred tongues and in tones far more eloquent than my own that you should take up arms to avenge their cruel fate. The knife drawn from a sister's heart is still unwiped of her pure blood ; and the rocks and trees are still red with the gore and dripping with the brains of your innocent and helpless babes. Your fathers and brothers, to save those dearest to their bosoms, have rushed to the awful conflict and given themselves as willing sacrifices upon the altar of their country, until the heavens are black with the ascending smoke of their smouldering bodies.

"But were these painfully tragic pages torn from the book of remembrance and obliterated forever, then, when duty and country call, brave men like those whose flashing eyes I see gleaming with determined and dauntless resolution would rush even to the cannon's mouth and 'do or die' for glorious victory.

"As well might Persia's king have stayed the rising waters of the broad Hellespont, and bound them with his iron chains, as for the King of France and his menial, Duquesnel, to attempt to bind the limbs of America's sons, whose valor has no terminus but liberty or the grave.

"But higher and holier motives than belong to ordinary occasions should animate and thrill the bosoms of this gallant band. You not only go to the release of your brethren from the grasp of the tyrant at Louisburg, that they may be restored to civil liberty, but to

rescue the people from the superstitious idolatry of a hireling priesthood and restore them to religious liberty.

"There, upon that bleak and barren island where the sun's rays never pierce through the gloomy sea fogs, you are to diffuse the warm and genial rays of the Sun of Righteousness, whose name I have placed upon your banner, and whom I now present to you as your own spiritual leader, and cause his healing beams to shine into their benighted hearts through the blacker and denser fogs of ignorance and superstition.

"Gentlemen, accept through your captain this banner as a free and hearty offering, and with the warmest wishes and most earnest prayers of a devoted heart for the perfect success and triumphant victory of the Mountain Rangers and the New England forces in general.

"O, never let it be disgraced by the hand of a coward or of a traitor, or by the profane grasp of a foe. But where the red blaze of battle rages hottest, and the dun clouds of smoke gather blackest, there let it swing out upon the breeze till victory is achieved, even if it is rent into a thousand fragments and the balls of the enemy and the blasts of heaven in doleful concert chant their requiem through its tattered folds. Soldiers, it is not only the flag of freedom, but the banner of Christianity. As you read its motto remember Him who is your Leader; and, despairing of nothing, victory will be yours.

"The learned astrologer of Holland has already foretold the glorious triumph that awaits America; and the planets who are the watchful guardians of her dominions appear attentive to her prosperity, and no misfortunes impend over her head. And if this cheering declaration is written in the planets so plainly that the astrologer can read it, O, let it be written in your hearts and achieved by your acts until it is known of all men. Finally, soldiers, may we meet again when victory shall be succeeded

by more peaceful and happy days ; and, until then, farewell !”

As the Forest Queen closed her address Captain Waldron, who had advanced and with trembling hand received the banner, in a manly though somewhat unsteady voice replied :—

“ Fair lady, permit me in behalf of the Mountain Rangers, and especially on my own behalf, to return our unfeigned thanks and heartfelt gratitude for so marked and signal a token of regard as this beautiful banner. Under any circumstances and on any occasion like the present would our country’s flag be received with deep emotion ; but when we remember that it was wrought by the same fair hand that presents it, our hearts can only feel that silent gratitude which our lips are unable to utter and language impotent to adequately express.

“ And never shall the flag bearing so significant and appropriate a motto as that selected and wrought upon its silken folds by yourself be suffered to fall into the sacrilegious hands of an enemy until the last drop of blood in the veins of the last Mountain Ranger shall have been shed for its protection.

“ And be assured, fair lady, no coward has dared to enrol his name upon the list of the Mountain Rangers. His hand would have been paralyzed and refused to inscribe the disgraceful name dictated by so craven a heart. No, these are the true and honest yeomanry, the brave and unterrified invincibles, in whose veins there is no trace or taint of cowardice. The music that greeted their birth was the clashing of the tomahawk and scalping knife, and the first lesson given them to learn was the war whoop of the murderous savage. They were cradled upon the bosom of sorrow and suffering and nurtured upon tears

and blood. And, although a few base cowards may still lurk and prowls about our settlements, the greater part have gone far beyond our borders into the pathless wilderness, to die abhorred as they have lived despised.

"And as for traitors, there are none in our mountain band who will ever prove recreant to their country's cause ; and if there should be even but one such, he could not breathe the same free air as ourselves, for this true mountain breath would refuse to vibrate through the pipe of treachery or play the march of life upon so false and discordant an instrument.

"Look ye upon yonder towering mountain, whose eyes of crystal gleam so brightly from underneath their beetling brows, and mirror back in full and true reflection the brilliant rays of this glorious harvest moon. In equal truth and fulness shall each soldier's acts in brave and heroic deeds of valor reflect the fervor and enthusiasm with which your eloquence has to-night inspired him.

"And sooner shall the lofty mountain itself shrink from the thunders above or the fires beneath, and, sinking to the plain, turn traitor to the lesser hills around its base, than that one Ranger shall shrink from the battle thunders, and turn his heart against his country or his back upon her foes.

"And the same faith in our final conquest which the astrologer found written in the planets is also an article of faith in the creed of every soldier's heart. But as for the caution against idolatry, the fair Forest Queen must pardon us if we fail to come up to her requirements ; for her own burning eloquence and matchless charms have set up an idol in all hearts to-night which can never be dethroned or destroyed. Yes, thy image and thy impress stand out in living fidelity from the heart's broad canvas, of which the astrologer's faith and the warrior's hope are but the supporting framework.

“ But the hour for our departure over the hills to our vessel that awaits us is at hand. We thankfully accept your banner and your blessing, and, by bringing back the former untarnished and undisgraced, will prove ourselves in some degree at least not unworthy of the latter. Until then, farewell ! ”

After the addresses at the presentation and reception of the banner were concluded Rozella arose, and, in a measure similar to the rhythm of the modern melody, “ O, carry me back to old Virginia,” sung the following song, in the chorus of which the soldiers joined most heartily, while between the stanzas the fife and drum repeated the air, and every one danced in time to their music : —

ROZELLA'S SONG.

I.

The gallant chief, for our relief,
Hath raised the flower of our land,
With hearts as brave as the ocean wave
That dashes on our strand.
Ho, boys ! unite for freedom's fight,
And seal the tyrant's doom ;
Each soldier swear no chains he'll wear,
By the light of the harvest moon.
Rat ta tat tat tat, &c.

II.

The stars are bright this autumn night,
They flash from out the sky ;
But still they're pale as smoke in the vale
Compared with a soldier's eye.
Ho, boys ! unite, &c.

III.

The savage came with knife and flame
And burned our dearest homes ;

Our blood hath flown o'er turf and stone,
In forests bleach our bones.
Ho, boys ! 'unite, &c.

IV.

This banner wave among the brave
For freedom to the world ;
And tyrants' breath be hushed in death
Where'er it be unfurled.
Ho, boys ! unite, &c.

CHAPTER XVII.

CHOCORUA AND HIS SON WENANE. — TAURUS AND JANUS DISCOVERED BEHIND HIGH ROCK. — THEIR DISCOVERY BY ELSIE AND WENANE. — SCENE BETWEEN THE ROCK AND CAVE, WHERE THEY WERE ROUTED BY WENANE.

CHOCORUA and his son Wenane, during the events related in the last chapter, had sat upon the doorstep of Squire Langdell's house. Wenane seemed well pleased to see his friend, the lovely Forest Queen, act so well her arduous part ; and his feelings became so enlisted in the scene that, when the soldiers danced to the rat tat tat of the drum, he sprang upright, and with steps and leaps and jumps danced with the others in a style which, if not exactly English, was very good Indian, upon his rocky floor.

But not so with Chocorua, who felt that all the blood the Indians had shed was in defence of themselves and their hunting grounds, upon which the palefaced usurpers had so unlawfully intruded. But he said to himself, "It is a time of peace between the paleface and the red man ; and Chocorua hath changed the hatchet for the pipe. He has buried the former, and offered up the smoke of the latter as a peace offering."

Then, with a deep sigh, he hurried with Wenane to their dark wigwam in the forest. On their way thither the young Indian frolicked and skipped like a young deer among the forest trees ; but the old chief was sad and silent. His heart ached as he thought of the wrongs he

and his people had suffered, and longed for an occasion to arrive when he might dig up the battle axe and take the field again, and possess himself of some of that "*flour of the land*" of which Rozella had sung, that he might knead it into bread to suit his own palate, or stir it into a mush after the most approved Indian recipe. On their arrival at the lodge, the old chief entered and immediately threw himself upon his bed of leaves and fell asleep; but Wenane, saying that he wished to gaze a little longer upon the full moon and the bright stars, remained outside.

After Rozella and Captain Waldron had shaken hands for the long separation, and exhausted all the terms and phrases of which they were masters in bestowing upon each other kind wishes and friendly adieus, the company, to the music of the shrill fife and the rattling drum, took up their long line of march for the vessels which were to bear them to the distant island, there to fight for their flag and their country. As they departed Rozella gazed with straining eyes after the retiring band, and ran over in her mind the scenes through which they might pass — the dangers they must encounter and the battles they might fight — till the last soldier had disappeared from her sight over the most distant hill. Then with faltering step, being somewhat exhausted by the fatigue incident to the occasion, and with the assistance of Elsie, she sought her couch, to ponder on the soldier's life and fortunes and on the part she had taken in the programme of the drama.

After the young ladies had retired to rest neither broke the silent meditations of the other for a considerable time. At length Elsie, whose quick eye had been schooled from infancy to notice all movements of a suspicious character, and who, while Rozella's address was being delivered, had observed two persons who seemed to avoid a near approach to the crowd around the platform, broke the silence.

"Dear Rozella, were there any unusual movements observed by you during the delivery of your address this evening?"

"None that I noticed particularly," replied Rozella, "except the general enthusiasm with which the people seemed moved. Was there any thing further that your keen eye detected?"

"It may have been," replied Elsie, "that a part of the mysterious movements of the individuals I saw is to be attributed to my suspicions merely; but the fact that I saw two men skulking behind the rock upon the knoll opposite, and that my enjoyment for the evening was much disturbed by their appearance, is not fancy."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Rozella; "and who did you suppose them to be? — Indians, were they not?"

"No," replied Elsie; "they were not Indians."

"Who could they be, then?" cried Rozella.

"If I am not much mistaken," answered Elsie, "and I think I am not, they were your old rejected lover and bitter enemy, Jack Taurus and his twofaced boon companion Dick Janus."

At the name of Taurus Rozella sprang up in bed cold and pale from the shock the mention of his name produced, and cried out, —

"But it cannot be he; for he has gone on his annual hunting excursion with the trappers up the lakes and mountains, from which they do not return until March or April."

"True," rejoined Elsie; "but it is March or April with Taurus at such seasons of the year as best suit his convenience. And, in this case, he probably heard that the Rangers were about to leave for Louisburg, and, thinking he would encounter no foe to oppose his deeds of infamy, has made a countermarch to October, and is now lurking about the settlement. At any rate, I am quite sure it was

he ; for he wheeled entirely round and fell lower behind the rock when Captain Waldron said there might be cowards still lurking in the settlement ; and I saw him motion to Janus when the captain stepped forward and received the banner, and brought his gun to his shoulder with one of his ghastly grins, as much as to say, 'I should like to bring him down if my own life would not have to pay the forfeit.'"

"Alas!" sighed Rozella ; "what can we do ? How I wish we had kept Wenane or the Indian doctor with us, and had them stand as sentries or sleep in the hall ! for we may all be murdered before morning."

"O, be calm, dear Rozella," said Elsie ; "there is no need of alarm to-night, for they are both arrant cowards. Besides, the faithful watchdog that lies in the hall will give us timely warning if they should dare approach the house. And of this they are as well aware as we are ; and if not, they will be apprised and made sensible of the fact that Jowler there is doctor enough for them when he bleeds them in the jugulars with his spring lancet patented for the depletion of patients so plethoric with infamy as themselves."

"But are you quite sure," asked Rozella, "that it was Dick Janus who was with him ?"

"Quite sure," was the reply ; "for I saw that ugly scar on the deformed cheek, and the red lid that has fallen and become immovably glued upon it, as though it was ashamed and utterly refused to conceal his eyeball glaring with so much falsehood, evil, and cruel malignity."

"Then," said Rozella, "it must have been he. But which way was the deformed cheek turned ?"

"Towards ourselves and the Rangers," replied Elsie.

"Then we may expect trouble," said Rozella ; "for he always turns that cheek upon his foes when he is plotting their overthrow."

"Nothing very ominous in that," rejoined Elsie, "for in reality both cheeks are equally bad ; and when he turns his sound one we know that it is only to deceive his victim, that he may be able the more effectually to poison him with the venomous virus of the other. But, dear Rozella, pray be composed and lie down ; for I will guaranty that no harm shall befall you to-night."

Rozella followed her friend's advice ; and being weary and quite exhausted from the fatigue and excitement of the evening, both were soon locked fast in slumbers, undisturbed by foes without or fears within.

After the company had dispersed — the soldiers to try the uncertain chances of war, and their friends with heavy hearts to their homes — all was still without save the hoarse howlings of the gray wolf from the depths of the dark forest, and the melancholy "who who" of the owl as he sat perched upon some dry tree, to which the red fox, who longed to lay his head upon the soft bosom of his saucy highness, sharply replied, "I I." At this hour the two worthies so well described by Elsie might have been seen cautiously creeping from the rock before mentioned, and noiselessly taking their course across the clearing toward a by-path which led to the mountains.

Of these twins in rascality Janus was perhaps the most cunning and deceitful, and was more gifted with a readier wit of the lower sort ; but Taurus was far his superior in intellectual power, and possessed quite a store of facts and sayings gathered from those with whom he had associated. But if they differed intellectually, morally they were exactly equal, both being on the same level in depravity and falling to the same depths of infamy. After this well-matched pair had receded sufficiently far from the settlement to be beyond both sight and hearing, Janus broke the silence with a scoffing repetition of a part of the motto upon the banner, "Nil desperandum." They

both raised a loud laugh whose echo made the woods ring.

"I suppose," continued Janus, "that means 'desperate nothing,' and applies to Captain Waldron, who is just that and nothing more. But before he returns we'll show the land sharks there's somebody left behind who will play the very deuse with them — that is, if we don't get found out and strung up ourselves."

"If we stick together," said Taurus, "nothing is to be despaired of;" at which there was another coarse laugh and another ringing echo from the woods.

This reminded them of the soldier's chorus, and they both struck out in the same breath, "Ho, boys! unite," &c. By the time they had finished the chorus they had reached a smooth ledge, upon which they balanced to each other through the "rat tat tat" of the tune. They kept up the jig some fifteen minutes, during a part of which time Janus imitated the antics of Wenane when upon the doorstep. When they had blown off the extra steam of exuberation and become quite sober, "Now," cried Janus, "for our concerted plan for the morrow."

"It is all arranged," replied Taurus.

"What is it?" asked Janus. "Not to turn coward and go back to the trappers, I hope. You said you were coming here either to destroy Rozella or force her into a marriage with yourself."

"So I did," answered Taurus; "and for that purpose only am I here. You remember the old tinker we found asleep by the roadside leading to the settlement last summer."

"Ay, well," replied Janus; "and I remember, too, that you stole his budget of tools, and he was not workman enough to solder up that leak in his life which his nap cost him."

"True," said Taurus; "and the old smelt probably be-

came sensible that he had too many irons in the fire after he got his fingers burned. But where are those tools and the sack now? Do you recollect?"

"Yes," answered Janus; "they are all, except the tube which I kept to blow the fire with, in a deep crevice of the cave whither we are going to-night. And if they were to lie there until Waldron takes the French island and puts Duquesnel in chains, they would not cement the deep crevice of the granite tomb in which they are buried."

"Tomb, is it?" said Taurus. "Well, then, we will wind the blowpipe and have a resurrection of our own in the morning."

"Not exactly of your own," laughed Janus; "for, if Wenane should rise first, you won't get up till towards night; and then, if you come out robed in your own deeds, 'twill be black enough to be called night, let the time of day be what it may."

Taurus's eyes now began to flash fire; and Janus was obliged to turn the matter off as a joke, saying, "Come, let's have no more blackguardism; give us the plot."

"Well," said Taurus, "to-morrow I am to be a tinker. The longhaired, gray wig, which I made of the scalp I got from the Indian, comes in use now. My false whiskers and eyebrows, and the spectacles I found upon the table where we called for the luncheon, ride my nose to a nicety. To-morrow the small Indian blanket is to be folded and bound upon my shoulders before I put on my coat; and thus equipped I will proceed to the house of Squire Langdell, and, while I am mending the handles of old teapots and kettles, I'll make a handle of my own with which to work out my plans to good advantage. And while I am repairing the locks, for the better protection of the doors, I'll make a key of my own, with which I'll unlock all their secrets and lay my schemes to obtain the fair Forest Queen; or, failing in that, to wreak my

vengeance on her and her hated Waldron. O, my soul envies him the rich prize he has drawn in the lottery of life! Envy is the seed of a man's desires, and revenge is the fruit. Waldron has sown the former; and he shall reap the latter, either in his own person or in that of his idol. Envy is the cause; revenge shall be the effect."

"But you were not always so," said Janus. "Once you were filled with love alone for her, and no envy then rankled in your breast."

"Love!" said Taurus. "I love her now better than ever. 'Twas her surpassing beauty and loveliness that to-night tore open the wounds of my heart anew, and makes every artery of minutest calibre bleed afresh. Ay, she is the snow-white Dove of Venus, and her wings glitter as if set with a thousand diamonds. Her food is not of ordinary grain; but she sips the ambrosial nectar of the gods and bathes her brilliant plumage in the very dew of heaven. Her couch is of the rarest and most fragrant flowers; and no slimy reptile like Waldron shall ever pollute it. Ah, well may you say that I was not always filled with envy. I am like the chameleon, which assumes the hue of whatever object it touches. Envy hath touched my soul, and I but reflect its rays of green and livid hate. O, it was those sweet lips that first called me Taurus; and I am still proud of the name! I would not change it for all the titles that were ever bestowed upon the proudest potentate of earth!

"But, although my love is so strong and overpowering, I am not like the softhearted and sentimental Waldron, sighing and whining about his mother's distress, and telling of the tears and blood on which he has been kept; for this is but food for babes. Taurus is like Vulcan, and never had a mother. I was begotten by a chance bolt of a midnight thunder cloud upon the wild gap of the mountain; and the first sound that hushed my infant lids to

slumber was the hissing music of the serpent's tongue. Why, then, should I not be envy and malignity incarnate? I have fed on vipers and been nurtured on adders. The tongue of envy is tipped with deadly poison, and its eyes are green and glaring with revengeful hate. No smile plays upon its distorted face except over the griefs and miseries of others. I can bring down the king of birds, even the soaring eagle, from its lofty height; and I can also bring to my feet the queen of women, even the lovely Queen of the Forest. The same hand that entraps the cunning beaver will also entrap the coyest maiden. Envy, hatred, and revenge will be a bitter draught for her to sip; but to my palate they are as sweet as the ambrosial nectar of the gods. O, how can the throat burned and blistered by the lava flame of envy be cooled but by the welcome draught of blood, blood, blood?"

And, screaming the concluding words at the top of his voice, Taurus fell, frothing at the mouth and completely exhausted, prostrate upon the ground, when whiz came two stoneheaded arrows, one knocking out one of the teeth of Taurus and the other going through the frock of Janus.

"Blood it is!" shouted Wenane. "Take that to scour your teeth with, ye cowardly varmints!"

They looked in the direction of the voice; and there stood the young chief, upon a rock in the edge of the bushes, standing erect and as straight as one of his own arrows.

"Come on, Pequawketts!" cried he; "we've got the palefaced dogs;" at the same time snapping the dried sticks and bushes and imitating a dozen different voices, while he howled like a wolf, barked like a fox, and hooted like an owl, almost at one and the same breath.

The two frightened cowards sprang from the ledge over an abrupt descent, and ran violently down the steep hill like their bristly kindred of old, and possessed by the

same spirit. Taurus, in his flight, damaged his gun upon a decayed stump over which he fell; and Janus blazed away at a lined-back quadruped, whose eyes, peering from under a fallen tree, he supposed to be those of an Indian; while both kept on a dead run, nor stopped until they reached a swamp where the thicket was so dense that they could run no farther; when they both slackened their pace to a quick walk, and soon reached and entered their cave, truly a den of thieves.

After they had rested a while and recovered enough of their breath to enable them to speak aloud, —

"Well," said Taurus, "one old brown-coated settler got settled snugger than he ever was before to this soil; and he won't rise before the sun does, I'll warrant. Only see how I bent my gun over his head!"

"Good," responded Janus; "but did you see that squad of Indians under the fallen tree? One little pappoose, with a white blanket trailing after him, undertook to crawl away; but I let drive at him and keeled him over, with his white blanket atop of him, though I hadn't time to stop and secure his scalp."

"Better yet," said Taurus. "I thought I smelt Indians."

"O, yes," responded Janus, "as strong as beavers; a whole tribe must have settled in there since we have been gone."

"But, Janus," asked the other, "how many Indians do you suppose Wenane had with him?"

"Twenty, at the least calculation," replied Janus; "and fast runners and sharpshooters, too, by the quickness with which they followed and discovered us and by the way the arrows flew."

"Yes," answered Taurus, "they flew fast enough; but that stoneheaded arrow didn't make my tooth very fast."

As he spoke both laughed aloud; but the sound that rung back from the dismal walls was so terrific that they sprang upon their feet.

"Strike a light," said Taurus ; "for, although the moon makes the entrance of the cave light enough, the back part is dark as Egypt."

"No one has discovered this retreat?" said Janus, inquiringly.

"That's what I was thinking of," replied the other.

So, striking a fire with gunpowder and dry leaves, they lighted a pitch-pine torch and searched the cave, but could find no indication of its having been entered in their absence.

"Well," said Taurus, "that young redskin has probably discovered my plot, and overturned the ladle of solder I was preparing for the morrow."

"I think," said Janus, "that you had better postpone the commencement of your apprenticeship for a few days ; although Wenane could not have heard the recital of your plot ; for I was looking in the direction from which he came until you had finished the scheme and struck into that pathetic strain of envy, snakes, and blood, when the whole and undivided attention of your audience was riveted upon the orator, till the orator was well nigh riveted to the ground."

"Well," said Taurus, grinning extensively, but not daring to laugh aloud again, "we will delay further action for a day or two, and see what discoveries we can make in the mean time ; and, if Wenane did not hear the plot, in two weeks from this time Rozella, the fair Forest Queen, the enchantress of all hearts, shall sleep in this cave a corpse or the wife of Jack Taurus."

They then, after a hasty meal from their knapsacks, threw themselves upon their bed of leaves, and were soon lost in restless slumbers and frightful dreams.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LETTER FROM THE FORTUNE TELLER FOUND BY THE ROCK. —
MEETING BETWEEN ROZELLA AND WENANE.

THE next morning after the exciting adventures and occurrences recorded in the preceding chapter the sun rose as brilliantly, and the unclouded sky welcomed the great king of day as warmly, as though all the world was at peace and each man fulfilling the law of love to his neighbor and of adoration to his Maker. No cloud floated in the morning sky, and "the winds were all hushed and the waters at rest." The thin and fleecy mists rose in wreaths above the variegated forests like early incense offered up upon the shrine of Sylvia to "Aurora, the daughter of the morn."

It was late on such a morn as this that a loud and repeated rap upon the door of their apartment awoke Rozella and Elsie, who, snugly locked in each other's arms, were both as snugly locked in the arms of sleep. Springing up, Rozella demanded, —

"Who's there?"

"It's me, Miss Rozella," cried a sweet and feminine voice at the door.

At this kind summons without, and impelled by the cheering messengers of the sun within, the young ladies arose, and, for the present, left their sorrows and their bed, both to be resumed when darkness shall again over-

shadow them. Rozella speedily opened the door, when in bounded her waiting maid, the little Owega.

"Well," said Owega, "Captain Waldron has gone off with the soldiers, and you can have all the day to yourself now. Won't have to use the fine teathings and nice cake to-day. Won't be here to walk out in the garden, and look at the vines, and talk about the flowers, and say the handsomest one he ever saw was in that garden, when he was looking right in Miss Rozella's eyes — eh?"

"O, fie!" said Rozella, blushing; "what strange things run in the brains of you young girls and slip out from your lips!"

"O, fie!" retorted Owega; "what strange things run in young ladies' eyes and slip out over their cheeks! Didn't wet both handkerchiefs on the table all through, sopping wet, wiping the tears and looking after the new captain last night — eh? Didn't think it looked very well, either, to scold the big captain so long as Miss Rozella did, then give him the new banner to make up, then send him off to fight fogs, and cry about it afterwards — eh? Ha! ha! ha!" while both young ladies joined in Owega's merriment and laughed as heartily as herself. But Rozella, thinking Owega had gone sufficiently far, remarked, pleasantly, but with dignity, —

"You will please not to make so free with my affairs, especially before folks."

"Don't want to make free," replied Owega, "with any thing except the breakfast. Mistress sent me up to tell you to come down before it gets cold."

"Tell mother," said Rozella, "that we will be down directly."

While the family, the guests, and the hired men sat together at the table, the doings of the previous evening, heroic, mirthful, and mysterious, and the breakfast, were served up together and thoroughly discussed. After break-

fast Elsie started for her home, about a mile and a half distant. A mile of the distance was upon the main road ; and the remainder was through the woods and over a muddy bog, upon which a rough causeway of logs was laid. Rozella and Owega were to accompany her to the turn of the road and wait there until she had time to get nearly home, to see that nothing befell her.

After they had left the house, "Now, Elsie," said Rozella, "I should like to visit the high rock opposite ; for every thing is so quiet and still this morning that I am inclined to believe it was nothing but the shadow of the high rock which you saw last night."

"I wish it might prove to be nothing more," replied Elsie ; "but I don't believe that this honest-looking rock would ever shadow forth two such unprincipled beings as Taurus and Janus. Besides, they have left characteristic traces of their actual presence in the tobacco stains upon the rock."

"O sorrow !" cried Rozella ; "this looks bad for us."

"And it would taste still worse than it looks," said Owega ; "for nobody but those lower than brutes would use the filthy stuff. But see here, on the ground !"

"O, it is a letter," said both the ladies at once.

Elsie caught it up, and they read the superscription, which made them both tremble ; for it was that dreaded name, Jack Taurus. Elsie opened the letter as they proceeded on their way and read as follows :—

DOLLY'S ISLAND, October 30.

DEAR JACK, — You wished me, if any turn in the wheel of affairs came up, to let you know of it. At first I thought I would let each one that shuffled the cards cut for themselves ; but, as you have helped me in the change of luck, I have concluded to give a shake for you. Duquesnel has dealt a blow in the game of war upon Eng-

land, and taken sixty men at one jump. England now begs of the settlements, and they are to give all their Mountain Rangers. This move breaks up the kingrow they kept stationed for the protection of the frontiers. They are to leave on the ten spot. Now is the time for you to turn up jack, throw out your boots, and catch the Queen of Hearts. You must conceal your hand, or the deuse will be to pay. She is quite low since Waldron has made a strike for the king and been crowned captain. They are to meet the evening they lead off at old Squire Langdell's, and will take leave of the queen with high colors. Most of the soldiers have been to me to know their destiny, and of 'course I threw out a promising card by telling them they would all win ; so the board will be clear for you to make a move. The old squire, who once sailed like a majestic swan among the inferior species of aquatic birds, is now drawn up with the rheumatism ; so that the young cygnet is unfledged, and her soft, white down can be easily plucked for a pillow for a trapper's head. Be on hand, then, and you will win the trick.

Yours for the fortune of life,

DOLLY PLOT.

"O, what shall we do now, dear Rozella?" said Elsie, as she folded up the letter. "Another enemy in ambush is discovered ; and one most malignant, too."

"Yes," sighed Rozella, as the tears rolled down her face ; "and discovered at the time, above all others, when we most needed sympathy and friendship. We have not now the strong arm of manhood on which we can rely ; and that arm on which we can alone rely works by means."

"Whether he works by means or miracles," replied Elsie, "I believe he will save those who trust in him ; and if he ever did 'temper the wind to the shorn lamb'

he will do so now, or turn aside the bleak storm that is gathering to discharge itself upon a head so defenceless and a bosom so pure as your own."

"Dear Elsie," said Rozella, "that arm is not shortened that it cannot save ; but, as the operation is spiritual and by faith, he will save the spirit, it may be, at the expense of the body. Therefore I shall suffer as much, and no more, than seems to him good. Who knows but for this affliction, which seemeth so grievous for the present, we might be left to fall as low and become as vile as the poor author of this letter, the infamous Dolly Plot. O, she needs our sympathies and our prayers rather than our anathemas."

"I have been informed," said Elsie, "that before she came from England she moved in the first society and was well educated."

"The latter," said Rozella, "you may readily infer from the style of her penmanship and the elegant formation of her letters. But O, to what depths of depravity and guilt has she fallen ! And I believe it is generally the case, that, when one who has trodden the high arena of purity and intelligence does 'fall from her high estate,' she sinks as much below the level of the common transgressor as she had previously risen above it."

"But what can you do, Rozella ?" asked Elsie. "Will you shut yourself up at home and cease your missions of mercy and kindness to the poor ? for since that horrid massacre by the Indians you have spent nearly all your time in errands of relief to the sick and afflicted."

"I shall continue to do so," replied Rozella, "until I feel it my duty to desist ; and that, probably, will not be so long as the voice of woe reaches my ear and supplicates the hand of Rozella to assuage the pain of the throbbing brow, or wipe the bitter tears from the flowing eyes and bind up the broken heart. I have one friend left — the

true, the faithful Wenane, whom I long to see. I expect thorns in the path of duty ; but, if I fall, you, Elsie, the friend of my heart, must take my mantle of charity and fill my place."

They had now reached the cross road ; and, bidding each other an affectionate "Good by," the young ladies separated. While Rozella and her little waiting maid stood to see that nothing befell Elsie on her passage through the woods, Owega broke the silence with,—

"I wonder, Miss Rozella, how you could speak so kindly of that old witch upon the island. I'd speak nothing but long knife about her. I'd make a hole into her heart through her ribs ; so that the kind prayers you spoke of would get in without stopping to knock. Yes, I would. Prayers won't stick in her hard heart unless you prick 'em in. I'd tattoo it, as the sailor's arm was who was here the other day. I'd turn up her 'jacks' for her, and play the deuse she tells about with her old fortune shop. If you'll let me go I'll have my fortune told ; and if nobody is there, instead of cutting the cards, I'll cut the throat of the old witch, so that she won't set any more wolves on Miss Rozella's track — eh?"

"No, no, Owega," answered Rozella ; "you must not run on so. It is very hard to bear, I know ; but there is a better way than that."

"What way?" asked Owega.

"To treat her with kindness," replied Rozella, "and overcome her evil with good."

"Good!" exclaimed Owega ; "she wouldn't know good if she should see it — eh? But look! there is Wenane coming through the woods."

"O, so it is!" cried Rozella ; "and I am rejoiced to see him ;" and up came Wenane, sure enough, with his good-natured smile on.

"How glad I am to see you, Wenane!" exclaimed Rozella. "How do you do?"

"I am surprised to see white squaw so far from home this morning," answered Wenane.

"O," replied Rozella, "I am farther from home than this almost every day. We are at peace now, and we can venture farther than we could when there was war."

"I know," replied Wenane, "that there is peace now; but there is no knowing how soon the hatchet will be dug up; for the Indians are getting dissatisfied, and some of the palefaces will put them up to massacre the people of the settlements again."

"I hope not," said Rozella, "although from appearances we have some enemies lurking about our borders now; for which reason I wished to see you and ascertain if you had seen any thing of my old enemy, Jack Taurus, and his companion in guilt, Dick Janus. Elsie saw them, as she thinks, behind the rock near the house while the Rangers were receiving the banner; and, besides, here is a letter to Jack from old Dolly the fortune teller. Do you know any thing about the matter, Wenane?"

"S'pose I do," answered he. "You s'pose Wenane would let an enemy of the Forest Queen be so near him, and he not know it?"

"But why did you not let me know of it?" asked Rozella.

"Ugh!" exclaimed Wenane; "had rather let them know it."

"Well," continued Rozella, "do relate to me while we are on our way home what you know about it."

"Yes," replied Wenane, "I saw Taurus and Janus behind the high rock, and saw Taurus point his gun at the captain and laugh at Janus; and when I saw his scarred face and red eye, I knew Taurus had a coward with him

only brave enough to fight women. When I was dancing on the doorstep I jumped up high enough to see there were only two of them, and knew they would not dare to attack the house till I had time to go home with big chief and return again. When the sachem fell asleep I ran back and found all still, and, knowing they must have gone to the woods, followed after and soon heard a loud voice like a preacher. When I came up with them Taurus was preaching to Janus about snakes and blood-blood of young Forest Queen. Then I took two arrows — one straight one for Taurus, and the other bent just enough to hit Janus — and shot them both at once. One hit Taurus in the teeth, and the other took out a piece of Janus's striped frock ;” and as he said this Wenane held up the trophy which he had so skilfully obtained.

“But,” said Rozella, “did they not offer to show fight?”

“Cowards — cowards !” said Wenane, with a gesture of great contempt ; “they can fight nothing but women ; for when I cracked the sticks and bushes, and shouted, ‘Come on, Pequawketts !’ they ran as though the wolves were after them. I knew they would not trouble the Forest Queen that night ; so I went back to the wigwam.”

“But, Wenane, are they not still lurking about the settlement now, or did your arrows frighten them away ?”

“I think they will be here again before they go back to the trappers,” replied Wenane.

“What would you advise me to do ?” asked Rozella ; “for I must be out among the sick and the poor who have lost their friends and relatives.”

“I think,” said Wenane, “that the young Forest Queen had better stay at home for some days, while I look about the woods and get on track of the dogs.”

For a number of days succeeding this interview Wenane reconnoitred the woods in all directions, passing from house to house and making inquiries of all the settlers in

order to strike the trail of the objects of his search ; but nothing was discovered, as the cunning brace ventured from their retreat as seldom as possible, and trapped instead of shooting the game on which they subsisted, that no report of arms should be heard. All this time Wenane was made much of by all the settlers, who not only flattered and praised him highly, but also pressed him to take more food than was needful or healthful. Chocorua frequently cautioned him against indulging in the hurtful and unnatural food of the whites, telling him that it was not fit for the paleface's stomach and was rank poison to that of the red man.

But Wenane paid little heed to his father's cautions, saying that while he was with white folks he must eat what they did ; so Chocorua appealed to the settlers, and earnestly requested that they would not offer food to his son ; but his remonstrances were unheeded ; and when Wenane called at their houses, they still brought forward their choicest dishes and stuffed him to repletion.

Rozella, who coincided with Chocorua's views concerning this matter, and who regarded Wenane as her chief stay and aid in this hour of impending danger, joined in the appeal to the settlers, and set them an example by giving him, when he was at the house of her father, such food only as she considered best adapted to his hitherto simple habits.

As time passed on Rozella resumed, though cautiously, her errands of kindness through the settlement ; and so anxious was she to relieve the distress of others that she had nearly forgotten her own.

Nearly a fortnight had elapsed since the interview before mentioned between Rozella and Wenane, when a social party of ladies, of which Mrs. Langdell was one, was held in an adjoining district. While this meeting was in session there was, as is usual when all are speakers of

the house, much "noise and confusion" while the discussion was going on; but finally the "grand committee" rose, and, according to *parlormentary* usage, resolved themselves into a *supplementary* body on *internal* improvements, which resolution was amended by adding thereto a *provision* to *incorporate* into the *body* of the bill a *strong* article on *China*; and the whole resolution, as amended, passed by a unanimous vote.

After a *full* and *protracted* discussion of the most animated character, the first clause of the bill was voted satisfactory without a count; while the second it was finally agreed to retain under consideration, that they might ascertain on what *grounds* it had been *made*.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE OLD TINKER AND HIS WORKMANSHIP.—ROZELLA HAS THE FOWL DRESSED FOR THE SICK.—HER DESCRIPTION OF BLIND SARAH DUSTIN.—OLD MRS. EMOND.—DEATH OF LITTLE HENRY GATES.

AFTER supper the tea set and its concomitants had of course to be examined and praised by all the ladies.

"But the cost of Britannia ware," said one, "is enormous nowadays; so, when the old tinker who is about the settlement called at my house yesterday, I let him mend all my tin and Britannia ware, which is now just as good as new."

"Certainly," replied another lady; "and the expense is trifling compared to that of buying new ware."

"I wish," said Mrs. Langdell, "if you see him again, you would send him to our house; for I have a number of articles that need repairing."

"We will do so," replied a number of ladies at once; "for he is a foreigner, old and deaf, and needs all the work he can get."

A day or two after the party Owega came running in to tell Mrs. Langdell that a pitiful old lame man was coming along the road with a big bundle on his back. Mrs. Langdell, as she stepped to the window and looked out, replied, "O, that's the honest old tinker, I presume; for who else can it be?"

"Poor man!" added Rozella; "he must be very old—

see how he is bent ! It is hard that he should be obliged to go about the country in this way for a living. I've a good mind to go and take his bundle and bring it along for him."

Presently the door opened, and in limped the tinker. Knowing that he must be tired, and hungry, and thirsty, Mrs. Langdell reached him an easy chair, while Rozella brought him some food and Owega supplied him with drink. Then, with a French accent, he inquired for broken teapots and such other articles as needed mending, which were brought ; and he commenced his operations. But little conversation passed between the family and himself ; for he was so deaf that it was difficult to make him hear without speaking very loud, and they thought they could converse freely with one another and he be none the wiser.

"O," said Owega, "look, Miss Rozella, at the ugly hump on his back ! And see his heavy eyebrows ! Why, I can hardly see his eyes."

"He is very old," said Mrs. Langdell ; "only see how gray his hair is !"

"Yes," replied Rozella, "it looks very much like old father Crandall's hair, whom the Indians killed and scalped when all of Captain Hilton's company were massacred except Dudley, who was peeling bark in the woods."

"I thought of him," said Mrs. Langdell, "when I saw him coming up to the door."

"O," cried Owega, "see him tremble ! He'll have a fit !"

They were all frightened for a moment ; but he soon became composed and went on with his work.

"How dirty his glasses are !" observed Owega. "He don't look much like Captain Waldron, Miss Rozella — eh ?"

All three now laughed ; but the teeth of the old tinker grated audibly.

"What sound teeth he has," said Rozella, "for such an old man!"

"Remarkably good," replied Mrs. Langdell. "I noticed them when he first spoke; only one front tooth gone."

"I guess," said Owega, "that somebody threw a stone at him and knocked one out, for I see his lip is bruised."

Again did the tinker's grinders grate together so violently as to make his long, gray locks tremble.

"Miss Rozella," asked Owega, "what are those long things there, like curling tongs?"

"O," replied Rozella, "those are called pliers."

"Well," continued Owega, "I think they would make good tooth drawers — almost as good as the arrow with which Wenane drew Jack Taurus's tooth."

Here the tinker dropped a teapot on the floor, minus a handle; and when he picked it up it was minus a spout. By this time his soldering irons were red hot; and when he drew them from the fire Owega exclaimed, —

"I wish I could run that hot iron through old Dolly's and Jack Taurus's hearts, and string them together as we do beads; don't you, Miss Rozella?"

"O, no," said Rozella; "their hearts are too rotten for that, and they don't deserve to be kept in such an honorable way. Their necks deserve the string most."

The tinker was now so agitated that he put his hot iron clean through the teapot and spoiled it entirely.

"No," said Owega; "nobody would keep their hearts as long as we have kept that letter from old Dolly to Taurus we found behind the high rock."

Hearing a noise, they now looked around, and saw that the tinker had dropped his irons and other articles, and stood, trembling all over, wiping the perspiration with one hand and fumbling in his pocket with the other.

"Gone," said he, as if speaking to himself.

Rozella now picked up the hot irons, which were burning the floor ; whereupon the tinker turned around and muttered, —

“Sick, sick ; come to-morrow ; can’t work good to-day. Give me rag to wipe irons on.”

Owega ran and brought a rag, saying, —

“There, old tinker, take that ; it’s nothing but a piece of Dick Janus’s old frock, torn out by Wenane’s stone-headed arrow.”

Rozella now spoke, and said that she did not wish him to have it, as she wished to keep it ; but before she could get to him he had drawn his iron through it and put it in his pocket. Rozella went nearer to him, and, speaking very loud, said, —

“I cannot allow you to have that to carry away.”

“Can allow me to have it to carry away,” replied the tinker ; “yes — tankee de lady — yes, yes ;” and in spite of all her efforts she could make him hear nothing further. As he commenced packing up his tools, one of the hired girls ran in and asked, —

“How many chickens did you say, Miss Rozella, I must kill and dress ?”

“Two,” replied Rozella. “Owega must take one to the sick man on the hill ; and I shall take the other up the north road to Phoebe Dudley, who has been sick a long time and is very poor. You may leave the wings on, as they will serve her as a brush with which to dust her hearth.”

“How soon are you going, Rozella ?” asked Mrs. Langdell.

“Directly after dinner to-morrow,” replied Rozella, “so as to be able to return before night.”

As they looked at the tinker, who was then passing out of the door, they observed that he had changed countenance completely, and now had on a peculiar broad grin, as he said, —

"Come to-morrow."

"That grin," said Rozella, after he had gone, "was nearly as malicious as that of Taurus."

"Very much like it," rejoined Mrs. Langdell. "The poor man is crazy, I suppose ; for he has spoiled one teapot and mended nothing."

"I hope," said Rozella, "he will never come again."

"Why so?" said her mother. "I thought your hand was always open to the poor."

"There is something about him so repulsive," replied Rozella, "that I dread to see him again, though I can hardly tell what it is. But my hand is open to the poor, and I hope it will never be shut to them ; for it gives me more satisfaction to relieve their distress than they feel in being relieved. And, now I think of it, I must carry old Mrs. Emond something to-morrow. There she lives, all alone, in that miserable old hovel, completely bent down with age, and so blind, too, that she can hardly see any thing, with no one to help her or hardly to speak a kind word to her for months at a time. Her friends are all dead, and she has no children to visit her ; and there she sits, from morning till night, with her feet in the ashes, covered with gloom and bathed in tears. O mother, my heart leaps with joy to make that wrinkled old face beam again with radiant smiles of heartfelt enjoyment. And how affectionately she thanks me ! Mother, I had rather have the pleasure I feel when she comes up to me, smiling through her tears, and, laying her trembling hand, with its sinews and blood vessels, upon my head, says, with upraised eyes, 'God bless you, my child !' than to have the Pope of Rome place a queenly crown upon my brow and say, 'I crown you lawful sovereign of all these broad dominions.' And there is poor, blind Sarah Dustin, who is the very imbodiment of loveliness. When the children tell her I am coming she hurries out with both arms extended

wide, so that I may not pass by her ; and throwing her arms like binding chains of love around me, and, covering me with kisses, says that I ought to be called Rosebud instead of Rozella. And when I make my little present and turn to leave her she sheds tears both of sorrow and delight, as if her tender heart needed those chains of love to be bound around it. What are all the chains of gold which city ladies wear compared with such pure embraces of love divine ? And how much pleasure did I take in administering to the childish wants of little Henry Gates in his last sickness ! There he lay on his forsaken straw bed — no one to allay his anguish or smooth his dying pillow. His father had just died from the wounds he had received in the last battle with the Indians ; and his mother was so lame and feeble that she was unable to wait on him, and had nothing to give him, either, save the few unsuitable articles of food which the neighbors brought him. His features, wan and wasted, wore a most ghastly look ; and when I went to him, and moistened his lips, and wiped the cold death damps from his brow, he knew me, and, raising his eyes, said, —

“ ‘Zella, shall I die ? ’ ”

“ I told him that he probably would, and that soon ; but that there was a Friend beyond the grave who would receive him and welcome him to a higher and happier world.

“ ‘Do stay with me, ’Zella,’ said he ; ‘for you have driven away the dreadful pain from my head and heart, too ; ’ and as he said this his countenance changed, and he put on one of the sweetest smiles that any save an angel ever wore. In a few hours his breath left him, but not that heavenly smile ; for, though he lay cold, coffined, and solitary, there was nought of gloom upon his brow ; but he seemed to smile with triumphant exultation upon the foe who had just slain him. I could almost fancy I saw his lips move and say, ‘Zella. I have conquered, though I

have fallen.' That smile was sweeter than the little wild flower I placed in his marble hand ; and it still rested on his face when we laid him in the grave, whose gloom and darkness it seemed to chase away. Since then I have never looked upon death but with composure, nor upon the grave but with complacency. O, has not that deed of charity reacted in peace and joy upon my heart a thousand fold ?

"Yes ; love alone is the oar with which the soul, as it embarks upon the unknown waters of death, can stem its roaring surges and reach the haven of its final rest. There shall all tears of joy shed for deeds of love and charity in the obscure and lowly cottages of the virtuous poor be changed to starry diamonds in the crown of its rejoicing, whose brilliant rays shall gleam with quenchless glory amid the radiant splendors of heaven forever and ever."

Here Rozella paused for her mother to reply ; but, as she did not, she looked up and saw her sitting with her handkerchief to her eyes, weeping profusely. Rozella started to her feet, and, in alarm, asked, —

"Mother, are you ill ?"

As soon as Mrs. Langdell could command her voice sufficiently to speak she replied, —

"No, Rozella ; never happier than at present ;" and, imprinting a fond kiss upon her daughter's brow, left the room.

CHAPTER XX.

RAINY MORNING. — ROZELLA'S DEPARTURE ON HER ERRAND OF MERCY.
— HER CAPTURE BY TAURUS AND JANUS, AND HER RESCUE BY WENANE.

THE next morning it rained heavily, and the thick clouds hung low over the adjoining forests, while the mountains were completely hidden in their dense and murky folds. The pattering raindrops upon the fallen leaves and the wild whistle of the wind through the bare branches of the trees seemed to play the death march of the Indian summer, whose life, though brief, had been joyous, and who, now that all else was withered and fading, seemed content to die.

Though the family of Squire Langdell was tranquil and cheerful, they could hardly avoid feeling somewhat depressed by the gloom without. Even honest Jowler, the faithful watchdog, seemed to catch the contagion, and whined uneasily as he lay in his accustomed corner, as if impatient of his confinement. A bountiful breakfast, however, seemed to dispel, in some degree, the gloom from their drooping spirits, and as the conversation became more general and animated Mrs. Langdell remarked, —

"Rozella, you will hardly be able to go out on your visit of charity to-day."

"I was just thinking," said Rozella, "that the more gloomy the day the more acceptable and welcome would

seem the presents ; and the more barriers surmounted in the path of duty the clearer the destitute would see that we felt and cared for them. But I cannot go if it continues to rain as hard as it now does. But you know, mother, you have frequently told us that, when it rains so violently in the morning, it generally clears up by noon ; and I am in hopes that, in this case at least, your theory may be confirmed by the result. In the mean time I will stitch up those little rents in that thick brown shawl and carry it to Mrs. Emond ; it will make her so comfortable the coming winter. I was thinking of starting before dinner, and going round by Mr. Tufton's for Elsie ; but if it clears off I think I shall go alone, as she may not wish to go out when the ground is so wet and cold."

"I wish she were here," said Mrs. Langdell, "to accompany you."

"So do I," replied Rozella ; "but as she is not, I must try to get along without her ; and, moreover, it is so stormy that none of my lurking foes will be abroad to-day."

In accordance with the prediction of Mrs. Langdell and the wishes of Rozella, before noon the rain had ceased and the waters were abated from the face of the earth ; and then the White Pigeon with her olive branch departed, not for, but from, her ark of safety. She was clad, as usual, in garments of her own manufacture, having on a russet loose gown, or tunic, extending several inches below the waist, where it was confined by an ornamented girdle wrought by her own skilful needle, and terminated in a scalloped flounce. The sleeves terminated in an embroidered cuff, beneath which a fan-shaped linen frill slid out upon her hands, which were encased in white knit worsted gloves, upon the back of which the figure of a vase containing roses was worked in colors of red, pink, and green. The border of her skirt was ornamented with

variegated stripes of blue and white laid upon an amber ground; and upon her feet were thick calfskin gaiters, which bade defiance to the cold, wet ground. Upon her head she wore a small cloth cap, with a beaver-skin puff around the edge and a little rosette of thin scarlet flannel upon the crown.

Thus arrayed she tripped along the muddy road, with her Indian basket upon her arm containing the shawl and the fowl designed as a gift for Mrs. Emond and Dudley. She presently left the main road and struck into a by-path, which led around a little pond and over a small brook to the north road, on which the old lady lived.

She felt quite buoyant and cheerful until she struck into the dark woods, where the dense bushes and the giant trees dripping with rain looked so wild and gloomy that she felt timid, and turned to go back. But as she reflected how frequently she had traversed the same path unharmed, she resolved to cast off her foolish fears, and, retracing her steps, again hurried on. As she did so she thought of Wenane, and wished that he was there to be her protector on her lonely way; and as she had not seen him for a number of days, and as that was the way he generally came, she hoped she might soon meet him.

This thought somewhat cheered her spirits, and she went forward more confidently. In a few moments she heard steps behind her, and, looking back, saw a tall, stout man, who seemed a stranger, coming hurriedly along the path. He had a large handkerchief tied high about his face and covering his mouth and nose, while a foxskin cap was pressed down over his eyes until the cap and muffler almost met. Rozella was much frightened; but observing that he had a fishing rod and a box containing bait which he was just returning to his pocket, she felt reassured again, saying to herself, "Surely an honest fisherman will do me no harm."

He soon overtook her, and in a hoarse, husky voice said, "Wet day, young woman."

"Yes, sir," replied Rozella, without raising her eyes.

"Bad luck I've had fishing to-day," pursued the man; "I've caught nothing, not even had a nibble before; but I think I shall catch an *alewife* now;" at the same time coming directly up to her and laying his heavy hand upon her shoulder.

With a shudder which shook her entire frame Rozella sprang out from under his grasp, and ran with all her speed along the narrow path. She gained rapidly upon her pursuer, and was fast distancing him when another man darted from behind a tree into the path before her. She cast one glance at him, and to her utter horror saw the scarred cheek and red fallen eyelid of Dick Janus.

She turned directly about, and sought to escape the fisherman by darting by him; but he had thrown off his disguise, and she was caught and held fast by the huge paw of Jack Taurus. She screamed in agony for deliverance; but no reply was made to her shrieks save by the woods, which alone rung back in dismal echoes an answer to her bitter wailings.

"It's no use," said Taurus, "chirp, cry, and flutter as you will.

I've watched you long — you're mine at last;
Poor little thing! you'll 'scape no more.

You have left your home for the last time, and will now be Queen of the Forest in good earnest. Come, start along."

Meanwhile Janus had torn the cover off the basket, and, discovering the chicken, cried out, "Halloo! here's something which will do for our supper after we reach the cave to which we are now going."

"I shall go to no cave," said Rozella. "This fowl I

am carrying to a sick woman ; and I demand of you that you let me proceed on my errand of mercy unmolested."

"Your errand of mercy," said Taurus, "will lead you directly to our cave in the mountain, where you will become the merciful wife of Jack Taurus."

"Never!" cried Rozella. "I will sooner become the prey of the howling wolf."

"March along," said Taurus, giving her a rough push.

"Never!" screamed Rozella, at the same time struggling with her utmost strength to release herself.

"The rope! the rope!" cried Taurus ; and Janus, drawing from his pocket a stout cord, passed it under her girdle, when Taurus exclaimed, "Not there — not there ; her neck deserves the string most, and around that it shall be tied."

"O," cried Rozella, as the cold, wet cord was fastened around her slender white neck, "I beg for mercy. Let me go, or my heart will break and fall at your feet."

"No, no," laughed Taurus, tauntingly, "it won't break or fall ; it's not rotten enough for that ; it must be strung like beads, not on the hot soldering iron of the honest old tinker, but upon the soft and silken cord of matrimony."

On looking more closely at the wretch as he thus spoke, Rozella saw that the "honest old tinker" and Jack Taurus were one and the same person.

"Villanous impostor!" cried she, "thus to deceive me by your infamous plot."

"Ha! ha!" sneered Taurus ; "but you were not deceived when you supposed my hair was the scalp of old father Crandall. Come, quicken your pace," added he, seizing one end of the rope and Janus the other, while the middle encircled the swanlike neck of Rozella. Then with great gusto they struck into a travesty of the song, —

"O gallant chief! for our relief
We've raised the flower of the land.
Rat tat tat," &c.

The only hope to which Rozella now clung was that they would meet Wenane.

"Janus," said Taurus, "have we not got almost to the cross path the Indians used to take to the mountain?"

"Nearly," was the reply; "we shall be there soon; and then we'll hamper her with the fish line as they do sheep. That will be the best way to string her."

"Yes," chuckled Taurus, "we'll lead her like a lamb to the fold."

Rozella's presence of mind did not desert her in this emergency; and she embraced every opportunity to step where the soil was muddiest, that Wenane might be sure to see her track.

"Here is the cross road," said Janus, as he turned off the path.

"Stop!" said Rozella. "I shall go no farther between two thieves. Both of you must go before me."

Somewhat nettled at her bold remark, and thinking it would do no harm to humor her, they preceded her, still holding fast upon the rope.

"Come on," said Taurus; and all turned into the path leading to the mountain.

At the time this cross path was first mentioned Rozella put her hand unobserved into her basket, and plucked from the wing of the fowl two large feathers and one of smaller size, which, as soon as their faces were turned, she placed in the road, with the quills pointing in the direction they were going. She knew the Indian sagacity of Wenane, should he come that way, would not only enable him to tell the direction they had taken, but also the number of her captors.

After taking the cross path they hurried her on through

the wet and tangled bushes until her dress, so neat and spotless at her setting out, was completely soaked by the water and bedraggled in every part. After they had gone nearly two miles they came in sight of an elbow in the pond, to avoid which they struck directly into the pathless forest for a high ridge of land above the pond. As her leaders turned into the woods Rozella, as quick as thought, placed another large feather across the path, pointing out the direction as before. She also broke a bush, and left it pointing the same way.

As they proceeded the last hope of Rozella began to falter ; and in order to delay their course as long as possible, she begged them to stop and remove the galling rope from her lacerated and bleeding neck. Taurus replied that they would remove it if she would go along quietly as she ought.

"I will go as I ought," replied Rozella.

They were now about four miles from the place where she had left the first feathers ; and as they thought that, as she could not find the way back, she would rather proceed than try to return, they ventured to remove the rope. A few rods brought them out upon a sandy ridge, where there was neither tree, nor bush, nor shrub ; and, casting her eyes forward, Rozella saw a sort of cove of the pond, where the water seemed to have flowed back. It was a muddy, miry bog, covered with dead, stagnant water ; and she thought that perhaps it would support her weight, while her pursuers would sink if they ventured upon it. She was about to start for the marsh when the huge hand of Taurus again fell upon her shoulder ; and he exclaimed,—

"Stop ; let us sit down on this rock and rest. This place," said he, as he pulled her down by his side, "is a fine location. See how it overlooks the whole of the lake, and commands a full view of the mountains in our rear ! Ain't it, Rozella, a grand spot for a house ? Here I shall

build me a house, and you and I shall pass many a happy day upon this spot as man and wife."

"Never — never!" cried Rozella. "I will die a thousand deaths first!"

"You cannot help yourself," said Taurus. "The same rope that led you to the woods shall bind you in yonder cave under the mountain until you submit, and that willingly, too, to become my wife and obey all my commands."

"But I see," said Janus, "the little bird has torn her dress very badly; but she can mend it, no doubt, as she has great skill with her needle. And here is a piece of my frock, torn out by a stone; she shall sew it in to-night. It is somewhat scorched by a tinker's hot iron; but I guess it will answer the purpose well enough."

"O," said Taurus, laughing boisterously, "she must not have that to carry away, any how."

Rozella then saw that it was the same piece which had been torn out by Wenane's arrow, given to herself by him, and carried off by the old tinker.

"I shall never soil my hands," said Rozella, "by allowing them to come in contact with the dirty frock of Janus, contaminated as it is by the still fouler person of its wearer."

"We will settle that matter after we reach the cave; so start along;" and himself and Taurus arose to their feet.

"Didn't you hear?" roared Taurus to Rozella, who still remained seated. "Start, I say!" at the same time giving her a rap over the shoulders with his fishing rod.

"Not another step," said Rozella, firmly, and looking him in the eye with a sternness which caused him to quail beneath its indignant glance. Then, taking from her basket a piece of brown paper, upon which she pencilled a few lines, she tossed it towards Taurus, saying, "You will at least have humanity enough to give this to my friends, that they may know my fate."

"Pshaw!" sneered Taurus; "better send old Dolly's letter."

"The rope — the rope!" shouted Taurus; and both started for the rope, which lay upon an adjoining rock. At that instant she darted from them and ran with all the speed of which she was capable towards the marsh. They both followed in hasty pursuit; but while Taurus gained upon her rapidly, Janus, not being so fleet a runner as his comrade, fell far behind. Taurus, knowing by her course that she intended to destroy herself, exerted himself to the utmost to overtake and recapture her before she should accomplish her purpose. She felt his hot breath upon her neck; and as she came upon the edge of the morass she saw that it was too soft and muddy to support even her light weight; and instantly and almost instinctively she threw herself flat upon the ground, and

Over her head she threw the tinker,
Hook and line, bob and sinker.

For, as she fell, Taurus, who was not able to check his headlong speed, stumbled over her prostrate form and pitched headforemost into the miry bog. As quick as thought she sprang to her feet, and, turning about, found herself in the arms of Wenane, whose powerful foot had also aided in Taurus's precipitate downfall.

Wenane, in passing through the woods that afternoon, had discovered the feathers in the path, as well as the broken bushes, and was not long in unravelling the mystery. Following on the trail, he reached one end of the sandy ridge just as the stampede commenced at the other extremity. By taking the hypotenuse of the angle he reached the line on which they were running just in time to intercept Janus, whom he struck much harder than he did the line; for he knocked him more than forty-five

degrees out of the line of perpendicularity, and left him stunned and senseless on the ground.

After the prompt assistance he had rendered Taurus in his froglike leap into the slimy pool of his more respectable kindred, and where he lay sprawling and floundering in the mire, bellowing lustily for help, Wenane hastened back with Rozella to give his first pupil another striking illustration of the momentum of moving bodies impinging in a right line upon another body also in motion. But he was sufficiently enlightened on that point, and was just trying to use his dividers, though his figures were somewhat unsteady ; and in his efforts to regain his perpendicular position he again and again was obliged to illustrate the principles of mensuration, in the demonstration of which he more than once spilt his red ink upon the ground.

CHAPTER XXI.

RETURN OF ROZELLA AND WENANE, AND THEIR INTERVIEW WITH THE FAMILY. — WENANE'S SICKNESS. — DETERMINATION OF SQUIRE LANGDELL TO CAPTURE TAURUS AND JANUS. — THE SUCCESS OF THE SETTLERS IN THEIR CAPTURE OF THE SAME.

WENANE and Rozella then turned their faces homeward ; and, as it was nearly night, they were obliged to make all haste to reach the main road before darkness should overtake them.

As Wenane stopped and seated himself upon a rock to rest, Rozella for the first time discovered that he was quite pale and trembled violently. In great alarm, she inquired the meaning of his unusual pallor and agitation.

"Do not be frightened," replied he ; "it is nothing new ; but my fast run just now has been too much for sick Indian. Chocorua, you know, thinks my sickness owing to the white man's food. Whether it is so or not I cannot say ; but I have now become so fond of it that I must continue its use or eat nothing. I have no relish for food prepared in the Indian mode ; and sometimes I am obliged to leave my father's wigwam when he is preparing his favorite dishes. I am very weak, having taken nothing but a little broth to-day ; but when I came along on my horse, feeling too feeble to walk, and saw the signals you had left for me to hasten to your assistance, my weakness was gone in a minute, and I felt as strong as a mountain bear,

and twice as bold and daring ; and I should not have thought of my sickness again until the Forest Queen was rescued or Wenane had fallen exhausted."

Rozella was much affected at his recital ; but Wenane entreated her not to be uneasy on his account, for that he now felt better, and they would be able to reach the main road by dark.

"And your horse is there, you say, Wenane?" said Rozella.

"Yes," was his reply.

"I am glad of that," added she ; "for you can ride as soon as we reach him."

"Yes ; and so can Rozella," replied Wenane.

They now proceeded on their way and soon reached the horse, who seemed as much pleased at their arrival as themselves, and manifested his pleasure by loud and repeated neighings. Both mounted the horse, and in a short time arrived safe at Squire Langdell's just as the family were sitting down to supper. Squire Langdell had just returned from Boston, whither he had gone in a vessel from Portsmouth for the benefit of his health. Elsie Tuf-ton had also called there on one of her friendly visits so agreeable to Rozella as well as to the family generally. The squire had good news for Rozella from Captain Waldron ; and all joined right heartily in the *mélange* of chat, cheer, and chowder.

During the supper the squire had monopolized all the time in relating the wonders he had seen in Boston and on his voyage, and the assurance felt by the people of Massachusetts generally that the expedition to Louisburg would result in a glorious victory.

After they had risen from the table, — "Well, Rozella," said the squire, "on what circuit have you been riding to-day?"

"I started," was her reply, "after the rain ceased, for

the north road, to carry a fowl to Phœbe Dudley, and a shawl to old Mrs. Emond."

"And you have been all that distance this wet, muddy day?" said the squire, laughing. "Well, you are a queer chick; but you have done somebody some service, I hope."

Rozella opened her basket, and, holding up the fowl, replied, —

"Not so queer a chick as this, after all; nor have I done such good service to-day as this little creature, which, you see, has shed its wing feathers."

"Why, how is this?" asked Mrs. Langdell; "would not Phœbe accept your offering? If our poor folks are above taking presents, I guess the times are going to be better, as the Boston people predict."

"Times are decidedly better with me," answered Rozella, "than they were a few hours since."

"The wolves have chased her!" cried Mrs. Langdell.

"The bears, more likely," suggested the squire.

"I guess," said Owega, "Miss Rozella has seen the strange Indians."

"Perhaps," remarked Elsie, "a combination of all these, in the shape of Taurus and Janus."

"Yes, Elsie," replied Rozella; "you have guessed it."

Then came the chorus of voices from all, "How was it? Where did you meet them? And how did you escape?"

All were now silent and attentive, and Rozella rehearsed the story of her adventures.

"Miss Rozella," said Owega, as the recital was finished, "do you suppose Taurus got out again?"

"I presume so," answered Rozella; "the last I saw of him he was scrambling along on his hands and knees towards a spot where the ground appeared firmer and the mud seemed to bear him up better."

"Well," responded Owega, "I hope he didn't get to the shore; for he ought to be buried there, where the frogs

and toads would croak over him and the snakes hiss at him."

"I think," said Elsie, "it would be an appropriate burial-place ; for, as he once lived upon and ate snakes and other loathsome reptiles, it is no more than fair, now that filth has returned to filth, that they should eat him. And, as Owega remarked, the sharp hiss of the serpents, and the gruff, guttural bass of the frogs, will be a fitting requiem."

"He is himself a venomous serpent," observed Mrs. Langdell ; "and I do not suppose his falling over Rozella would deprive him of life, especially when he lodged in his own native and congenial element."

"No, no," said the squire ; "Hercules himself could not have crushed this hydra-headed monster as easily as he destroyed those of the same genus that came up from the Lernian Lake in Peloponnesus. However," continued the squire, "if they are worth talking about they are worth hunting for ; and although we may not be able, in the absence of the Mountain Rangers, to raise, from the old, infirm, and inexperienced settlers who remain, as gallant a band as they, still, get us warmed up, and we can fight some yet. Therefore, I propose that, on next Friday, the day after our annual Thanksgiving, we turn out in a body to hunt for the cave and smoke out the sneaking scoundrels with gunpowder. We now know the direction of the cave ; and I will send runners to the neighboring towns and summon every man who is willing to volunteer to meet at this house ; and, as Wenane knows the localities, he shall be the captain, or pilot, to whom Rozella may, if she chooses, present another flag."

"Father," said Rozella, "Wenane is out of health and quite unable to bear the fatigue of such an expedition. But, as I know the way as well as Wenane, I will be the captain, with your leave ; and the enemy will get no

quarter until the rope draws more snugly around their necks than did theirs around mine."

"And I," said Elsie, "will be your aid ; and shall select as my war horse my father's old white steed, who has seen service in these terrible Indian fights, and is as impatient as a caged tiger for another. I shall ride him on this fox hunt, and will take odds that he will be in at the death."

"I don't know," said the squire, "about this business. I am fearful you wouldn't make very good Joans of Arc."

"We don't expect," replied Elsie, "to become quite such heroines as she is said to have been ; but perhaps we might by our example keep the men in heart, and inspire them to persevere in the undertaking."

"Well," said the squire, "we will think of it when the time comes for us to start."

"Well," retorted Elsie, "we shall think of it before, and be ready to march by the time you have fixed upon."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HUNT FOR TAURUS AND JANUS. — THE FLIGHT OF TAURUS. — CAPTURE OF JANUS AND DOLLY PLOT, AND THEIR BANISHMENT.

ON the morning of the above-named Friday all the men and boys of their own town as well as those who had volunteered from the towns adjoining, young and old, sound and lame, were collected in and about the house of Squire Langdell. A bountiful and sumptuous breakfast was provided by the squire, of which they partook as heartily as could be expected so soon after Thanksgiving, which, being but the day before, had taken off the sharp edge of their appetites. The company, all told, numbered twenty; of whom ten were men, eight boys, and two ladies. A number of the young men were from a considerable distance, who, having heard of the matchless beauty of Rozella, had volunteered more for the sake of getting a sight at her than for the purpose of capturing her greatest enemy. Some had come merely from idle curiosity; and, that being satisfied, they had determined to return without going farther; and some were on the point of returning to their homes.

At this moment the large doors of the barn were thrown open and Rozella rode out upon Wenane's fleet steed, which pawed the ground and champed the bit, impatient for the start. She was accompanied by Elsie, mounted on her

father's white horse, which, though old, seemed full of the fire of youth, and ready to "show how fields are won."

Rozella was apparelled much in the same style as at her departure on her errand of charity; but in addition she had a long, plaid sash around her waist and tied upon her shoulder. Elsie was equipped in a similar manner.

When they appeared all hearts beat high; those who before had grown indifferent now became reassured and eager for the fray; and those who were leaving hastened back, and, to a man, fell into line and stood in marching order.

Squire Langdell was chosen captain; whereupon he turned to Rozella and asked her where her standard was.

"Here, sir," responded she, taking hold of her sash. "And here," she continued, laying her hand upon her heart, "is the standard bearer. While this is seen in advance, let no soldier's heart grow faint nor his step turn back."

Then the air rang, as of old, with cheers for the Forest Queen; and, orders being given, the company marched.

Some of the older men were on horseback and some on foot, and a part carried guns; while the remainder were armed with axes, pitchforks, and shovels. Inasmuch as they knew not the locality or condition of the cave, they supposed all these implements might be necessary to the successful prosecution of their enterprise.

As some of the company knew of a better way to the ridge above the pond, they took it, and were thereby enabled to reach that locality before being compelled to dismount.

They then walked down to the bog and saw the muddy

bed of Taurus, his track to the shore, and the place where he had crawled up the bank. Three very low and subdued cheers were given ; for they knew they were in the vicinity of the den of thieves.

"There," said Rozella, pointing to the mountain, "Taurus said the cave was at the foot of that mountain."

"Here, then," said the captain, "we must leave our horses and proceed cautiously on foot."

The horses were now secured, but in such a way as to permit them to browse upon the shrubs and bushes around the borders of the ridge, and the company then proceeded cautiously forward. When they came to the foot of the mountain they halted for consultation ; and as no cave was visible, they again advanced. They had gone but a short distance when the report of a gun was heard but a few rods in their front ; and, on looking up the mountain, they saw upon a projecting ledge a tall, stout man, in a foxskin cap.

"It is Taurus," said Elsie ; and as she spoke he again discharged his piece. They then knew it was to give Janus the signal that danger was at hand ; and of course the cave could not be far off.

As they advanced Taurus scrambled up the steep ledge of the mountain and disappeared.

They then advanced, and soon discovered a large gap in the ledge, nearly high enough to allow an entrance without stooping, which was unanimously considered to be the cave for which they were in search. As they neared its mouth a noise was heard within ; and suddenly a dirty-looking object in a striped frock rushed out, and, although several guns were discharged at him, ran rapidly down the hill. He continued on, knocking down one old man and running over several boys, until he encountered Rozella, who stood ready with the rope which had been left on the

ledge, and, as he approached, quickly threw it over his head. As Janus, for he it was, ran the length of his rope, Rozella and Elsie drew him back violently upon the ground, half choked and stunned, when the men came up and made him fast.

They then entered the cave, having lighted pitch-pine torches, and soon came upon another of its inmates, who proved to be the notorious Dolly Plot, then on a visit to her friends. She was awfully frightened, and begged for life in despairing tones, but was much relieved on being assured that they did not design to take her life ; for she did not deserve death at their hands.

"O," said Dolly, feeling unusually grateful, "I will tell all of your fortunes for nothing."

"Indeed!" cried Elsie. "If you can foresee future events, why did you not foresee and avoid this misfortune?"

"No one," replied Dolly, "can foretell their own fate."

"Perhaps not," responded Elsie ; "but any one can predict yours."

"What is it?" asked Dolly.

"To be tied to the other end of the rope with Janus, driven down to the settlement, and there publicly exposed, as a terror to all evil doers."

"Right!" shouted the whole company. "To the other end of the rope with her." And to the other end of the rope they fastened her ; and the well-matched pair were then driven down the mountain and along the same path in which but a week previous the lovely Forest Queen had been driven.

When they came to the main road, Janus turned the sound cheek towards his captors and declared Taurus to be the instigator of the whole plot ; that he, Janus, was friendly to the colonists, but, over-persuaded by Taurus, he had been induced to take the course he had, and for which

he was filled with deep and heartfelt sorrow ; that for the future he would change his course, and, engaging in the service of the settlers, fight, and if needs be die, for them.

Dolly was equally penitent, and declared that she had no ill will against the good people of the settlements ; that, being a stranger, with no friends or relatives to assist her, she was forced to take up fortune telling for a living ; and, moreover, it was but natural to take sides with those who had patronized her ; that Taurus had always befriended her ; and when he used all the persuasions and entreaties of which he was master to induce her to assist him in obtaining Rozella, she pitied him so much that she finally yielded to his request ; that she had not left her lonely island before now for a number of years ; and, if they would allow her to return this once, she would never leave it again unless to leave the country.

So much did her recital excite the sympathy of the young ladies that they untied her, and Elsie allowed her to ride behind her the remainder of the route.

The company arrived at Squire Langdell's late in the evening, and found a warm and bountiful meal awaiting their coming, and to which they did full justice. It was then voted that the two captives should be securely tied to separate posts in the garret for the night, and that the following morning Janus should be taken to Portsmouth and sent out of the country by the first vessel that should sail, and that, if he ever appeared in the settlements again, it would be at the peril of his life.

It was decided that Dolly should return to her hut for the few articles of furniture and clothing, and then remove to an island in the Winnipiscogee and reform her mode of life ; and, if Taurus should again make his appearance,

she should immediately inform the settlers of the fact. To this Dolly readily agreed. The company separated, well satisfied with the result of their expedition; for, although they had not captured the prime mover of the plot, they had secured his comrades, and, as they supposed, driven him back to his old quarters among the trappers.

CHAPTER XXIII.

APPEARANCE OF CHOCORUA AT THE SQUIRE'S HOUSE FOR ROZELLA. —
WENANE'S SICKNESS INCREASES. — ROZELLA VISITS WENANE. — SAD
INTERVIEW BETWEEN THEM. — SONG OF THE SPIRIT HUNTSMAN, AND
SUNG BY ROZELLA TO THE DYING WENANE. — WENANE'S DEATH.

THE morning after the exciting scenes recorded in our last chapter was ushered in clear and cold. The frost lay in a myriad of sparkling crystals upon the ground ; and the forest trees, in their pure white dress, seemed as though they had "put on their beautiful garments" of rejoicing at the overthrow of the enemies of their youthful queen. And Rozella herself never appeared happier or more beautiful. She said that she now felt as though she could breathe freer and deeper than before, and that her sorrows and troubles were nearly ended. But none can remove the impenetrable veil of the future ; and in this case Rozella was no exception to the general rule. The coming events could not have been predicted even by Dolly herself ; for they did not cast before them even the shadow of a shade.

Rozella had scarcely finished her expressions of joy at the relief she felt from her trials and troubles when the door opened, and there appeared the stern, iron countenance of Chocorua, the great sagamore of the Pequawketts and father of Wenane. He had rarely visited the house of Squire Langdell ; and they knew by his dejected looks and

mien that there was trouble in the wigwam, and suspected its cause.

"I hope," said Rozella, "the great chief has not come for Wenane's horse; for I was intending to send him to you as soon as he had eaten his provender."

"No," replied Chocorua; "I did not come for the horse, but for the white queen. Wenane is very sick, and must die."

"Die!" exclaimed Rozella, in astonishment; "he must not die; for I have no other protector in the absence of Captain Waldron."

"Nor have I any other protector," replied Chocorua, "nor any thing else to make me wish to live when he is gone."

"When was he taken worse?" inquired Rozella.

"The night he ate the big Thanksgiving at Mr. Governor's," replied the chief.

"I will go directly and see him," said Rozella; "and perhaps my medicines will relieve him."

"He shall have none of your medicines," responded the chief, sternly. "The food of the white people has already laid him thus low, and your medicines would finish him. I have gathered all the roots, barks, and herbs which are good for sick Indian, and steeped them for his drink; but none of them makes him better. He knows he must die; but he wants to see the young Forest Queen once more, and then, he says, he can die in peace. But if he does die, woe to the paleface who poisoned him with his cursed food! for there will be no peace between him and me."

"I will go immediately," said Rozella, as she commenced putting on her out-door apparel.

"I, too," said Elsie, "will accompany you."

"No," said the chief, with darkening brow; "not one step. No paleface but the Forest Queen enters the wigwam of Chocorua."

"I am not afraid," said Rozella. "I will go alone."

"Not alone," replied the chief; "for I will go with you. The young queen must ride Wenane's horse, which must be at his burial should he die."

Rozella mounted the horse as the chief desired, and, with Chocorua at her side, proceeded to his wigwam in the forest. The chief was gloomy and taciturn, and spoke not except when Rozella interrogated him concerning Wenane, or to give the usual Indian grunt of assent to her remarks.

Although Chocorua had buried the hatchet and smoked the pipe of peace with the whites, still, since the speech of Captain Waldron on his departure for Louisburg, where he so unjustly charged the Indians with spilling the blood of the settlers without cause, he had longed more than ever to dig up the tomahawk and bury the pipe of peace in its stead. But, with all his hatred of Captain Waldron, whenever he reflected that his own bloody account was not crossed out, still, for Wenane's sake, if for no other cause, he treated Rozella with the greatest respect and kindness. But he was master of his own feelings; and, notwithstanding the long-smothered fires of his hatred were kindled anew by what he termed the murder of his son by the white man's food, he concealed his anger so completely that Rozella supposed him to be as fast a friend to the settlers generally as he was to herself.

As they neared the rude lodge of the chief the horse pricked up his ears and neighed loudly, which brought several Indians who had been watching by the side of the sick man to the door; and then, for the first time, the eyes of Chocorua were suffused in tears. He dashed them away almost as soon as they came; and in a moment his features resumed their wonted sternness and rigidity, and he seemed a brazen statue, incapable alike of joy or grief. As Rozella dismounted, and, with the chief, entered the

lodge, the Indians within left it and retired beyond ear-shot. As she entered, Wenane, who, save a pet cub of a bear, which was tied in one corner, was now the sole inmate of the wigwam, looked up with a pleasant smile and extended his thin and wasted hand. He had changed so much in the brief space of time since she last saw him that she could hardly believe him to be the same ; while the tears fell fast from her melting eyes, and she was unable to utter a single word.

"Young queen," said Wenane, "I am very glad to see you at my bedside. I shall stay with you but a short time ; and I could not go 'on the pathway of spirits' till I had seen that dear face once more and thanked you for all the good you have done me ; and although I knew it was beneath the dignity of the Forest Queen to come to the wigwam of a poor Indian, yet, as I could not get to you, and knowing your kind heart, I thought you would not feel degraded by coming to me. So I sent for you ; and you must forgive me if I have not done well."

"Wenane," replied Rozella, "nothing gives me greater pleasure than to visit you in your sickness ; but I am pained to see you so ill, and fear for the result."

"Have no fears for me," replied Wenane ; "for, though I am fading like a summer flower, yet shall I bloom again in brighter colors in the great garden of the spirit land."

"I hope so," responded Rozella ; "but do you believe that all your offences are forgiven?"

"Offences?" said Wenane, inquiringly. "Have I offended the young Forest Queen?"

"Certainly not," answered Rozella.

"Who then?" asked Wenane.

"No one on earth," said Rozella ; "but we all have sinned, and, when we appear before the same Judge, shall need the same pardon and forgiveness."

"All appear before the same Judge!" cried Wenane.

"The paleface cannot roam the fair hunting grounds of the red man except he intercede with the Great Spirit, whom you call Judge, for admittance."

"Dear Wenane," said Rozella, "as I fear you are soon to leave us, I must speak plainly ; and I know my friend Wenane, the tried and true, will pardon the seeming unkindness of my remarks."

"Yes," answered Wenane ; "speak plainly ; for I know the lips of the young Forest Queen cannot say what her heart does not feel."

"Then," said Rozella, "I must tell you plainly that there is no hunting ground for the red man after he leaves the present world."

"Then," replied Wenane, "I must tell you as plainly that you are mistaken, and that your eyes are not open to the brilliant light that streams down from the starry hunting grounds of the sky. Does not Rozella remember when she asked Wenane to go and hear the great Whitefield preach, as she called his talk?"

"Certainly," replied Rozella ; "I remember it well."

"And will not the Forest Queen," continued Wenane, "be good enough to repeat what he called his text?"

"It was this," answered Rozella : "'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork?'"

"And does not this prove that the red man's belief is right?" asked Wenane ; "and are not the Indians his own peculiar people, for whom, as the great preacher said, all these things are made ? And did he not say — as the red man has always believed — that there were the great dog, the hart, and the peacock with his sparkling plumage, the lion with his shaggy mane, the great bear and the little bear, together with all kinds of fishes, all stars, and that the north star was set like a diamond in the tail of the cub bear ? There, too, was the red man, with his

bow and arrows, upon his fleet horse, and whom he called Sagittarius, or the Archer. This is the land where our fathers are now pursuing their game; and I shall soon be with them and join in the chase."

"Wenane," said Rozella, "I admire the ingenuity with which you defend your brilliant conceptions of the fairy hunting fields of the red man; but you do not understand what constitutes a true believer in Him who died that we might live, and was raised from the dead to intercede for us with the great Father, that we might, through him, be enabled to enter the gates and walk the golden streets of the city of the New Jerusalem, and be admitted to the house of 'many mansions' prepared for our reception. The glories of that place are not like those which the old astronomers have imagined and to which you have alluded. 'For eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man' what is there laid up in store for them."

"That may refer," observed Wenane, "to some wicked white men; for the Great Spirit, the red man thinks, has revealed these things to us. And the door of which you speak was opened for the red man; yet I will intercede with the Great Spirit for you, and come on the same horse you rode here this morning. Chocorua will send him to the spirit land with me, and when Rozella is called I shall gallop down the skies to meet her; and as we rode from the dark woods the other day to your father's house, so shall we ride home together from this dark world to the broad hunting grounds of the Great Spirit."

"But you must not talk more now," said Rozella; "it tires you too much, and you are already nearly exhausted. Can I not do something for you?"

"All has been done that can be," replied Wenane; "but you may give me some water if you please."

Rozella arose and procured the water, and at that

moment the chief entered the lodge. He stood like a statue as his eye fell upon his son ; for he had changed very much since morning. At length his feelings got the mastery of him ; and as he moved towards his son, the massive frame of the old warrior shook and swayed like an aged oak in the fierce blast of the tornado.

"Wenane," said the chief, covering his face with his blanket, "must soon die."

"Before I die," said Wenane, "I must see my noble horse, who is to be my only companion on my long journey."

The chief instantly proceeded to the little bough house but a few steps from the lodge and untied the horse, which immediately turned and followed him to the lodge. He entered the door without hesitation, and, approaching Wenane, rubbed his head gently against the cold cheek of his dying master, as though he perfectly understood his condition and gave him up as reluctantly as the old chief himself. The thin, wasted hands of Wenane were engaged meanwhile in fondling and patting the face and untwisting his long forelock and flowing mane.

"Now, Fleetfoot," said he, addressing him, "your master is about to depart and leave these waving woods, with their gurgling waters, their bounding deer and their singing birds, all dear to my heart, but made a thousand times dearer by the friendship of the young Forest Queen, who holds dominion over all. And you, my good steed, have the same attachment to these things that I have. You love all that I love, and all love you that love me. Now, will you leave all for your master, and bear him to his far-off home in the skies?"

As Wenane ceased speaking Fleetfoot gave a low whinny, as if to signify his assent to his master's proposition, and then, of his own accord, turned and left the lodge.

"Enough!" cried Wenane. "I see, far away in the broad

pathway of the stars, the white-plumed horsemen gathering to meet me. Hark! I hear a burst of joyous music from the skies. O, let me go! for I long to join the glorious band who are now riding down the starry slopes of heaven to escort me thither. Rozella, how glad I am to have you with me! O, wipe off again the cold drops from my face, and again place your soft hand upon my throbbing temples! for it hushes my raging agonies into peace. How soft, yet how bright, are your eyes! They seem to gleam with the same light I see in the skies. After all, the one to whom the young queen looks, and loves, and worships, and whom she calls Father and Judge, and the one that I love and worship, and call the Great Spirit, are one and the same, to whom we both look for guidance and protection. Can you doubt this, Rozella?"

"It may be so," replied Rozella; "at any rate, we will discuss the point no further at present."

"Zella," asked Wenane, in a low tone, "is the spark about to go out and leave the brand cold and fireless?"

"Even so," was her reply; "the flame wanes and flickers, and will soon expire."

"Then," replied Wenane, "Chocorua must bring my best robes; and the skilful hand of Rozella, which adorns whatever it touches, shall assist in fitting them properly and tastefully, so that Fleetfoot may not be ashamed of the young chief he so proudly bears as he surmounts the dizzy heights of the blessed hunting fields beyond the stars."

Quickly did Chocorua obey the wish of his dying son; and Rozella assisted, in compliance with the last wish of her friend and protector. Wenane was soon arrayed in his new blanket, tastefully ornamented in front with beads and stars, while upon the back was a representation of a deer chase. It was fastened by a large brooch, upon which appeared the figure of an Indian canoe. His wam-

pum was adorned with shells of the rarest beauty, and wrought with small strips of variegated bark, with stars of mica sewed between.

His moccasons of buckskin were also ingeniously wrought with beads and porcupine quills; and his cap was of beaver skin, with a broad band of scarlet, in which were stuck long eagles' feathers; while on its front was represented a crescent moon, and on the crown a view of the rising sun.

His face was then painted with the brightest colors, and his bow and stoneheaded arrows placed in his hand, ready to draw on his game; while his tomahawk and scalping knife, of the finest English workmanship, were fastened to his belt. Thus equipped, he still sat upright; but his eyes were dim and glassy and his hands purple and cold. He could still speak, and, as they finished attiring him, said, "Chocorua, am I ready?"

"All ready," answered the old chief, in a trembling voice.

"Then," said Wenane, as he turned his dim and dying eyes upon Rozella, "let her who cheered the heart of the brave captain when he departed to his conquest across the blue waters with her song, so sweet that it took away all thoughts of danger, now sing the Spirit Huntsman's Song as he passes over the gulf, dark with death on this side, but bright with life beyond it."

Whereupon Rozella, whose eyes overflowed with tears, sung in a plaintive but inexpressibly sweet voice

THE SONG OF THE SPIRIT HUNTSMAN; OR, THE INDIAN'S HOME.

I.

Far, far away, in starry regions,
Wild breaks the huntsman's cry;
There's where the fleetest game by legions
Ranges the fields of the sky.

There the bear roams on the mountain,
And broad-winged eagles soar;
There waters, fresh from crystal fountains,
Sparkle in light evermore.

II.

Far yonder, where the stars shine brightest,
There's where the moose ever roves;
There bounds along the elk the lightest
Through the celestial groves.
O, this world in gloom seems weeping!
Weary on earth I roam;
Far distant is the haunt I'm seeking;
Gladly I haste to my home!

III.

There hunting grounds for me are lying,
Where deer and hart fill the plain;
Thick the arrows through the air are flying,
Falling, yet plenty's the game.
Eyes, like diamonds bright, are glowing
Down through the broad, arched dome;
There hunters to the chase are going;
There is the Indian's home.

So excited was Wenane as Rozella closed his favorite song, that, though in the very throes of death, he sprang upon his knees, and, in a voice far above its wonted power, shouted, "I see him!" while at the same instant the twang of his bowstring and the whiz of his arrow were heard, and the young cub at the other side of the lodge was seen struggling in its death agony, pinned fast to the log to which he had been chained by the swift arrow of Wenane, which had passed entirely through him.

They looked at Wenane, and he, too, was lifeless. The hunter and the hunted had fallen by the flight of the same shaft.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BURIAL OF WENANE.—CHOCORUA DIGS UP THE BATTLE AXE.—THE CHIEF ACCOMPANIES ROZELLA HOME.—PIKE'S INTERVIEW WITH THE CHIEF.

BUT not only with Wenane died the pet cub, but also all that was humane in the bosom of Chocorua. His eyes were frightfully bloodshot and his countenance haggard and ghastly. Rozella became so alarmed at his wild looks and strange conduct that she arose, and, taking her cap and gloves, was about to depart, when Chocorua, fixing his bloodshot eyes upon her, exclaimed, "Not one step until that stolen flower, (pointing to Wenane,) plucked by the murderous hand of the paleface, is planted in the soil of his fathers. For Rozella will be the only one who will remain to remember the place of his burial; and may she visit it often and remember it long. But I see that the young queen is frightened and trembles like the leaf on yonder willow. She need not fear; for no harm shall befall her. She tried to save the life of the young chieftain; and Chocorua would save hers, even at the expense of his own. But woe to that house that last sheltered him and to that hand that last fed him! From this moment Chocorua is a warrior; and there is not, and never will be again, a soft spot in his heart. But the chief of the Pequawketts must have on his war robes when he performs the last office for his murdered son."

He then equipped himself in his full dress after the manner of his tribe, and painted his face and breast until the colors ran down upon the ground. He also shaved all of his head except one tuft, which he left for the better accommodation of him who should, if he could, take his scalp. He then went to the bough house, and, bringing Fleetfoot to the door of the lodge, placed the body of his son upon him, and bade Rozella follow. She did so, and was the only mourner who followed this strange hearse. Chocorua proceeded on until they came to an old and spreading oak, on which were a few rustling dead leaves, when he laid the body of his son upon the ground and commenced digging the grave.

"This," said he, "is the spot. I smell English blood on the steel."

He dug the grave deep, but not long, and at length exclaimed, "Here it is," as, casting a terrible look at Rozella, which made her shudder again, he drew up from the bottom of the grave a bearskin, rolled around something which seemed of immense value in his eyes, and laid it by the side of the grave. He then placed the corpse of his son in the grave in a sitting posture, together with all his battle implements, and, after arranging his bow and arrows upon his hands, drew his own pipe from his girdle, and, breaking it in a spiteful manner, deposited it beneath the body. Then, laying over it some hemlock boughs and oak leaves, he covered the whole with earth.

"Now," said he, "the sun is going down; and that bright orb and the son of the chief shall enter the happy hunting fields of our fathers together. But the son of the great sagamore and the last successor to the office of chief of the Pequawketts shall not walk like a dog of the Narragansetts to the starry hunting grounds."

So saying he led his son's horse upon the grave, and, drawing his long knife, cut his throat so completely around

that he fell directly upon the grave ; and the last sad funeral rites of Wenane, the kindhearted and heroic friend of the Forest Queen, were ended.

While these mysterious ceremonies were going on Rozella had involuntarily drawn back a few rods, still keeping her eyes riveted on the scene before her ; and when they were finished Chocorua bade her come forward. She knew not but her own turn had now come, but dared not disobey, and therefore advanced to where the chief was standing.

"Did the young queen," said he, "see the sagamore bury the broken fragments of the pipe of peace, thereby signifying that he should smoke with the whiteskin no more?"

"I did," said Rozella.

"And here," pursued he, "taking up and unrolling the bearskin he had dug up, "is the battle axe of the Pequawketts. I now unroll it for the last time ; and it shall never again be buried. Its edge is now hot with thirst for blood." Then, running his fingers along its edge to ascertain its keenness, he continued : "Chocorua can tell by feeling the pulse of the steel when the blood is feverish in the veins of the palefaces and needs to be let out. Ah, I see the edge is keen and hot. Here are the axe and the knife ; but where is the victim ? But the Forest Queen need not turn pale, for 'tis not for her blood that the hatchet thirsts. But o'er yonder hill the pile is reared ; and where the victim sleeps to-night the fire shall be kindled ; and Chocorua and the ghost of his murdered son will dance around the smoking caldron to the shrieking music. Revenge ! — O, 'tis sweeter than the morning dew ; 'tis sweeter than the white man's food to a starving Indian. Ha ! ha ! But look ! in yon thick cloud there lies a bank of snow — the first gift of the wintry clouds bestowed to cover the new-made grave of the slain as well as the tracks of him who is to be the avenger."

Rozella by this time had recovered in a measure her wonted fortitude and self-possession, and now spoke : —

"It cannot be that the great chief who so long since buried the hatchet, and has lived so quietly with the settlers, now means to do them harm."

"The word is spoken," replied Chocorua ; "the hatchet is dug up ; and from this hour unceasing war is declared between the white man and the last sagamore of the Pequawketts."

"O," cried Rozella, "let the cries of the innocent babes and helpless mothers soften the heart of the sachem, and keep him from committing so foul a deed of cruel revenge."

"Ah," answered Chocorua, "the young queen does not know the Indian's heart ; and when will she learn it ? The groans of men, the wailing cries of babes, and the piercing shrieks of women are but the dulcet tones which the Indian wakes from the melodious harp of suffering and woe, as his revengeful fingers sweep the bloody strings."

"I had learned," said Rozella, "that his heart was fiery and revengeful ; but if such be thy nature, I now learn that it is as cold as it is cruel and revengeful."

"Cold !" retorted Chocorua. "Ha ! ha ! That cloud to which I just directed your eye, and which hangs in the far regions of the north as a cap to the glittering glaciers of the frigid zone, is not colder nor more icy. And the mild glances of the modest maiden's eye, raised in supplication to the great sagamore, have no more effect upon his determined purpose than the pale moonbeams, that, as slyly and as modestly as her own mild glances, send their silvery rays through the silent night, have upon the piled-up mountains of perpetual ice. But look ! it is dark already ; and the timorous bird will leave me now, and

seek her own nest of innocent repose. Would that Chocorua could find a pillow as soft as her own, and a bed as quiet and peaceful as is his whom her sweet voice has lulled to sleep in this cradle of the grave!"

The bloodshot eyes and the distorted features of Chocorua, as he ceased speaking, so alarmed Rozella that she stood as if spellbound at first, and then trembled like a leaf of the aged oak above her head. Neither did she dare to ask him to accompany her through the woods as a protection against her old foe and the new enemies she saw leave the wigwam at her approach. The old chief observed her agitated demeanor, and, divining the cause, remarked, —

"The young Forest Queen will not refuse to forgive the hasty words of the father of Wenane. I was wrong when I bade the trembling bird leave me, and go alone and unprotected to her home. I will go with her until she sees the curling smoke from the chimney of the house where her father lives, and where, without her presence, the flashes of the hearth fires upon the wall would be as dark and gloomy as the black cloud that hangs over yonder lake."

So saying they both left the spot and returned to the lodge. Chocorua went in; but Rozella went only to the door, while, as she looked into the now lonely dwelling of her lost friend, tears started afresh to her eyes, and she realized the greatness of the loss she had sustained.

Chocorua first took down a long gun from the wooden hooks on which it had been suspended, and exclaimed, "Longshot, you will bring down the deer the farthest;" then, putting his hand to his forehead, continued, as he replaced the gun and took up his bow and arrows, "But Stillshot will be less likely to alarm the settlers. Now,"

said he, turning to Rozella, "the great sagamore of the Pequawketts will walk on friendly terms with the white squaw for the last time."

They then started for the settlement; and both maintained a silence broken only by the savage howl of the far-off wolf and the dismal hoot of the great horned owl. The winds whistled drearily through the wailing pines, and the snow, which had commenced falling, fell thick and fast.

As they approached her father's house Rozella ventured to address the old chief:—

"Chocorua," said she, "will you, the father of the fallen Wenane, in consideration of the love and friendship he ever felt for me, listen to me but for a moment?"

"Speak," replied the chief; "but be brief, for I can go but little farther."

"Let me entreat you, then," continued Rozella, "to forget your animosity and revenge, and continue to live with the settlers, as you have done for the past year, on terms of peace and friendship. Bury again your tomahawk; and if need be, bury it in this bosom, if blood must be shed and one victim will satisfy the sacrifice you have sworn to offer."

As she closed Chocorua stopped suddenly, and fixed upon her a stare so demoniacal in its fury that she was glad to avert her eyes from the glaring and fiendish gaze.

"You entreat me," replied he, "for the sake of the love and fidelity of my murdered son, to forget my revenge and live at peace with the settlers. Ha! ha! Will the young queen look at the cloud over her head? See how it is swollen with snow, and how rapidly it throws it down to earth. Now ask of that cloud that it shall cease to send its overflowing burden upon the earth, when every part of its fleecy folds is swollen nearly to bursting. Would it obey her? Yet it would do so far sooner than Chocorua.

And does she think that Wenane's love and fidelity to herself were greater than mine to him? No, no; Chocorua would be unworthy the name of Sachem of the Pequawketts, or father of Wenane, did he not avenge his death. The ghost of the murdered Wenane, mounted upon his faithful Fleetfoot, is still lingering about his grave; nor will he take his flight to the fair hunting grounds of the sky until his death is revenged; and then he will depart satisfied and in peace. But were the great chief to bury his tomahawk in a bosom so pure and innocent as that of the young Forest Queen, does she suppose Wenane could rest in yonder peaceful grave while his father proved so recreant to the charge bequeathed him? No—a thousand times, no! When his ghost should scent the innocent blood from so spotless a heart it would burst the chains of death and the grave, and rush forth to avenge it. Even the foul spirits of darkness would be let loose upon the wretch, and be permitted to wreak their utmost vengeance upon so vile a monster. But here is the young queen's house; let her enter it in peace, but think no more of changing the purpose of the great sagamore; for the last kind act that he will ever bestow upon a paleface is now completed."

And, as he finished his harangue, Chocorua turned and was soon lost to Rozella's sight in the storm of fast-falling snow.

Rozella immediately entered the house, and made known the sad news of the death and strange burial of Wenane, and of the determination of Chocorua to massacre the family of Mr. Grovenor.

"But Mr. Grovenor," said the squire, "is absent from home, having gone to Dover, and will not return before to-morrow."

"O," exclaimed Rozella, "what can be done for the safety of his innocent wife and helpless babes? Can-

not some one go and inform them of the impending danger ? ”

“ Yes,” said Pike, the hired man of the squire, who worked on the farm during the week and led the singing on the Sabbath, “ I will undertake to carry the message.”

“ It will be at the risk of your own life,” said the squire ; “ for Chocorua is a cunning old fox ; and if he has dug up the hatchet and commenced anew his bloody work, ten men would hardly be sufficient to defeat him.”

“ I will undertake the message, nevertheless,” answered Pike ; “ for their lives are in danger ; ” and putting on his overcoat and taking his gun, left for the house of Grovenor. He had gone about half a mile when, in passing a clump of bushes by the roadside, the twang of Stillshot was heard ; and the arrow pierced the side of Pike, but, striking a rib, glanced and twisted around in such a way as to go twice completely through all his garments, and its stone head came out just over the breast bone. He fell ; and Chocorua, who winged the shaft, sprang towards him with his uplifted tomahawk to despatch him and secure his scalp. But just before he reached him Pike sprang to his feet and cocked his gun, the music of which Chocorua did not exactly relish, and therefore halted. Pike, fearing that the moisture of the falling snow might cause his piece to miss fire, was careful not to risk it ; for he well knew that, in case he failed to bring down his antagonist, his own life must pay the forfeit ; and therefore he went backwards, still holding his gun to his face and threatening to fire. Chocorua followed him with uplifted tomahawk until he had nearly reached home, when, calling him a cowardly, palefaced dog, he turned back and left him with his shag overcoat pinned fast to his body by the long shaft of old Stillshot. Pike then entered the house ; and, with the assistance of Squire

Langdell and Rozella, the arrow was soon extracted and the wound dressed.

None of the family of Squire Langdell left the house that night ; for the storm raged violently, and they knew not how many of his tribe the infuriated chief had around him.

CHAPTER XXV.

BURNING OF GROVENOR'S HOUSE BY CHOCORUA. — CAPTURE OF THE TUFTON FAMILY. — THE SETTLERS RALLY AND DEPART FOR THEIR RECAPTURE AND TO DESTROY CHOCORUA. — FAIRY SCENE IN THE WOODS. — THE ENCHANTED WOLF OR WILD SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAINS. — SOME SMART.

TOWARDS morning the storm of snow turned to a rain ; but before sunrise the rain ceased and the sky was clear and unclouded. The icicles hung in conical pendants from the boughs and glittering in the sunbeams, while the trees stood with their gigantic trunks seemingly plated with solid silver. The earth had put on her white sacerdotal robe to perform the funereal rites of lifeless autumn ; and, as the lawn of the white-gowned fraternity too often does, it covered but a useless mass of dead and inert matter, "having the form of godliness but denying the power thereof."

The family of Squire Langdell had just left their beds when Mr. Grovenor came in on his way home. He had stopped over night about five miles from the squire's on account of the furious storm, which prevented his going farther. He had taken an early start while the stars were yet bright, and was thus enabled to reach the squire's about the usual time of the rising of the family. They then informed him of the threats of Chocorua in consequence of the death of his son, and of his attack upon Pike

as he was on his way to forewarn his family the preceding evening. Taking a hasty breakfast, and collecting a few of the neighboring settlers, they hastened to the place of Mr. Grovenor—but not to his house or to his family, for both had perished in the flames. Where the house once stood there was now nought but thin air; and in place of the happy, smiling faces of his wife and children lay only blackened and smouldering corpses underneath a shapeless mass of charred beams and half-consumed timbers.

The mournful wailings of poor Grovenor were indeed heartrending. He had left his family well, happy, and, as he supposed, safe, and had found but their lifeless bodies, burned, blackened, and repulsive. He threw himself upon the ground; and his distressed cries and agonizing groans would have drawn tears from the very stones themselves had the eyes of rough, stern manhood refused to weep. But if, like Rachel weeping for her children, he refused to be comforted, like Chocorua lamenting for his son he would be revenged.

"It is Chocorua," cried he, "who has done me this irreparable evil."

"And Chocorua's blood," replied every voice, "shall pay the penalty."

Runners were now sent in every direction to rally the settlers, who by noon had assembled at the usual place of rendezvous, the house of Squire Langdell. But what startled them more, if possible, than the destruction of the Grovenors, was the intelligence brought by one of the runners, while Rozella was pleading with her father to be permitted to join the scout, that the Tufton family, consisting of the heroic Elsie, her father, and two younger sisters, were taken captives by another band of Indians and carried off. The quick brain of Rozella was instantly at work to devise a plan for their relief; and in a few minutes she made it known. It was that she should ac-

company the scouting party until they came in sight of the encampment of their foes, when she would proceed alone to the lodge of the old chief, who would listen to her earnest entreaties in behalf of the captives and deliver them up.

Her father and some of the older men still objected to her plan as impracticable, and that, moreover, the project of going at all was tampering with her own safety, and might be detrimental to the success of the expedition. But she persisted in urging her plan, and insisted that the liberty of her dear friend and even her life depended on her going, for she would die if compelled to sleep in the woods at this season of the year; and, moreover, if they proceeded without her and overpowered the savages, or should the Indians see that the rescuing party was too numerous for them, in either case they would at once destroy their captives, and thus all would be lost.

And so eloquent and forcible were her pleadings that the company finally yielded, and granted her permission to accompany them and put her scheme in operation.

As they were about to start a squad of five men appeared, who proved to be new comers to that section of the country, having been up to view their new purchases of the Masonian proprietors at Merry Meeting Bay. The sufferers told them the object of the expedition, and they volunteered at once and joined the band. Each man had a knapsack and carried provision enough to last them several days. They chose True Grovenor leader, and advanced, not in regular military order, but in single or Indian file.

Rozella and two or three of the older men were on horseback, and were to ride until the dense bushes and fallen trees rendered it impossible to go farther with their horses, when they were to leave them to find their way back alone.

They soon came upon and followed the trail of Chocorua, which led, as they expected it would do, into the trail of the party that had captured the Tufton family. They satisfied themselves by the footprints in the snow that the Indians did not number over fifteen, while their own party consisted of twenty-two, among whom were a deacon, a bushcutter, a sailor, several farmers, and an Irishman. They took fresh courage at their superiority of numbers and renewed the pursuit with redoubled zeal. The trail soon led into the wildest forests and through the densest swamps, and ere long separated ; but as they had no difficulty in detecting in the new snow the footprints of the shoes worn by the captives from those of the moccasins of the Indians, they now discovered that the family had also been separated, and that, while the father and one daughter had gone to the right, the other two daughters had gone to the left.

The party of English now separated, and each division was to pursue the enemy until they overtook and recaptured the captives ; and in whichever party Chocorua might be discovered, he was, by general consent, to be shot at once.

Each division then pursued its separate trail until the gloom of darkness began to settle down upon the woods, when, just as they began to think it time to select a suitable place to encamp for the night, the two trails ran into one and both divisions came together. The division which had taken the right-hand trail struck the common path first ; and, fearful that they might overtake the enemy with only half their force and thus be overpowered, halted for the other party to come up. While they thus waited, fearful that the others had encamped for the night, they discovered a light gleaming in the bushes directly in the course in which the trail led. This light they supposed to proceed from the encampment of their foes, and

were about to take the other trail and return to their friends, when to their great joy they saw them approaching. On their arrival a consultation was had to devise a plan for further proceedings, which resulted in their sending out Pike to reconnoitre the camp of the enemy. He soon returned and reported — to the great joy of some, but to the greater sorrow of others of the braver part of the company — that what they saw was only the fire the Indians had left burning after taking their only meal for the day.

The company now advanced to the fire; and, as the place was securely shut in by the surrounding bushes, they thought it a good location for their encampment for the night. The soldiers now threw off their packs, took out their blankets, and gathered around the fire; some of their number bringing wood for the fire, while others set about preparing the evening meal.

During the whole of the day's march Rozella had observed that one of the young lads, whom she thought quite too young to engage in so dangerous an excursion, had kept close by her side; and when the company separated on the different trails he refused to go in that division to which he had been assigned, but insisted on joining in that to which she belonged. Her curiosity being somewhat excited by his singular conduct, and wishing to learn something concerning him, she approached the spot where he was sitting, and, as no one in those primitive days was fettered by the modern scruples respecting introductions, (and which in one case, we believe, caused a gentleman to decline rendering assistance to a drowning lady because he had never had an introduction,) entered into conversation with him.

He appeared well informed and sprightly, and was dressed as well as any of his comrades. His cap was of coonskin, doubled upon itself and sewed up at the sides,

which left it of a wedge shape ; while around his neck was tied a thick strip of flannel. His clothes were all of domestic manufacture, but were comfortable and clean. He wore checked trousers, with a vest of the same pattern, and a blue jacket, of fulled, but not sheared or pressed, cloth.

"Well, young man," said Rozella, "we have had quite a fatiguing march to-day."

"Not at all," replied the youth ; "to me, at least, it has been nothing but sport."

"Well," said Rozella, smiling, "you are resolute, if you are young."

"Old enough for the redskins," returned he ; "but as to being resolute, that will be better determined when we overtake the bloody critters."

"Right," replied Rozella ; "but permit me to inquire your name."

"Some Smart, ma'am," was the reply.

"Sam Smart ?" repeated Rozella.

"Some Smart," again answered the lad.

"I have never seen you before," continued Rozella ; "but I suppose you live in the settlement."

"I am stopping there for the present," replied Smart ; "and, hearing of this massacre last night and the capture of the Tuftons, I thought I should like to join in the sport of pursuing them ; for may be I should get a chance to shoot one of the critters."

"Is your gun true ?" inquired Rozella.

"She's smart," answered Some.

"What do you call her ?" pursued Rozella.

"Fishhawk," replied Smart ; "and if she don't pick an Indian's eye afore to-morrow night I'll throw her into the pond for the fish to eat."

Supper was now served, with a blanket for a tablecloth, upon several pewter plates, and was immediately sur-

rounded by the hungry squad, who did not fail to do it full justice. Smart sat beside Rozella, to whom he was quite polite in his peculiar way, not failing to assist her to whatever was in his reach. He soon finished his meal, and arose and stood looking at the fire ; and, as all were occupied with their own affairs, and the plans for the morrow were being laid out, Rozella ceased to interest herself for the present in young Smart.

All at once the terrific howl of a wolf was heard directly outside the circle. They all sprang to their feet, and saw an enormous gray wolf bounding directly before them, with eyes fiery and glaring, and mouth open wide enough, as it seemed to the soldiers, to swallow any one of them at a bite. He bounded between them, and, leaping entirely over the blanket, disappeared in the bushes on the opposite side with a howl so frightful that it made the woods ring in every direction, until its wild and unearthly echo died away, miles off, upon the sides of the mountains. He came and was gone before any one could bring his gun to bear upon him ; but one or two discharged their pieces in the direction of his disappearance in order to keep their courage up and to intimidate the dreadful monster.

"No sleeping here to-night," said Squire Langdell.

"It's the devil," said Pete Hardy.

"I should think," said Pike, "it was the old wolf I shot last month come to life again, from the hair being gone from his hip, only he is full twice as large ; and the howl of that one was but the yelp of a puppy compared to the lionlike thunder of this fellow."

"Where is Smart ?" asked Rozella.

"Here I am," replied Smart, as he lay curled down upon his hip just behind them.

"What do you think," asked Rozella, "of such a monster as that? and what sort of a wolf is he to dash through our midst with such tremendous bounds?"

"I think," replied he, "he was some smart;" and dropped his head carelessly upon his arm to rest.

Presently another wolf howled far away in the swamp, as if in answer to the first.

"We shall have the whole pack upon us before morning," said one of the new comers.

"Yes," responded Pike; "with the Indians on one side and the wolves on the other we shall be between two fires; and what kind of a chance shall we stand then?" asked he, looking at Smart.

"A smart chance," replied Some, "with the growling thunders of the wolves on one hand and the thundering gun barrels of the Indians on the other."

"Well," continued Pike, "I shall stick to my gun and fight to the last; but such a little specimen as you are will be swallowed at the first mouthful."

"May be so," retorted Smart. "No doubt you will stick to your gun as close as you did when Chocorua's arrow pinned your old coat to your hide, while you were trying to back out of the scrape and threatening to shoot the old chap if he advanced another step."

All laughed, and Pike looked surprised, and finally turned to one of the party and asked, —

"How did the boy know that?" Then, looking at him, he added, "I guess you are rather smart."

"Some," said the boy; "but the man that tumbles over and rolls about in the snow drift because an arrow has grazed his ribs must be a great deal smarter."

Captain Grovenor now put an end to the merriment by informing the company that it was time to lie down to rest, as they must be on the march at the first streak of morning light, and must breakfast before they started.

"What three men," asked he, "will stand sentries the first half of the night, and what other three will relieve them for the remaining half?"

"I think," answered Pike, "the whole company had better bivouac ; for, as we have both wolves and savages to contend against, three men will hardly be enough to guard the camp to-night."

"I think," observed Smart, "that every man had better lie down and roll himself up snugly in his blanket while I stand sentry alone ; and if any Indian or wolf approaches I will give the alarm before he gets within a hundred yards of the camp or forfeit my head."

"Bravo !" cried Rozella, enthusiastically ; and "Bravo !" responded the whole band, who, although they did not exactly know the meaning of the word, took it for a term of approval.

"He's a regular breaking up team," shouted the farmer.

"He's a perfect stub scythe," put in the bushcutter.

"He's a gallant craft," sung out the sailor.

"He's a precious volume," continued the deacon.

"And not bound in calf, either," added Rozella.

"It's himself that's a rale smart broth of a lad," roared the Irishman.

"Some smart," rejoined the boy ; "and now all hands to their downy pillows ; for I take the post of sentry alone, and I warrant ye it will not suffer in my keeping."

So saying, he brought his gun to his shoulder with a true military air, throwing his weight upon his left foot, and bringing the right foot forward in marching position, with the toe dropped so as to bring the sole parallel with the ground, and commenced his beat around the encampment.

The soldiers felt so much confidence in the youth, who exhibited so much courage and self-possession, that they immediately stretched themselves upon the ground, and were soon nearly lost in the silent realms of sleep, when the plaintive song of the whippoorwill was heard among the trees, and each man sprang to his elbow as though it

was the wild war whoop of the lurking savage which he had heard rather than the musical note of the night bird. As they gazed around in utter astonishment they saw their faithful sentinel still "walking his lonely round," perfectly composed and undisturbed.

"A whippoorwill in winter!" ejaculated one.

"It was a spirit!" said another, shuddering.

The next moment the notes of a mocking bird were heard in an opposite direction. The whole scene seemed fairylike and unreal. The long pendants of innumerable icicles, suspended from every bough of the surrounding trees, glittered in the flashing flames of the camp fire, and returned a thousand rays and reflections of varied yet exquisite brilliancy and beauty. No one now dared speak save Rozella, who inquired, in a low voice, —

"Mr. Smart, where are we, and whence comes this heavenly music of the birds?"

"We are in fairyland," replied Smart. "The enchanted wolf of the forest has called up the spirits of the mountains, and they have taken possession of the place. Let not a voice be heard, for we are on enchanted ground."

All now wrapped themselves in their blankets and looked and listened with all their eyes and ears, but did not dare to speak. As they again relapsed into a somnambule sleep, or trance, the music commenced again, sweeter than ever. The flames flashed forth into the enchanted forest; the spirits danced in fantastic quadrilles in the shadowy recesses of the rocks; and flitting forms, of strange and unearthly beauty and symmetry, leaped into life as the silvery sounds broke from the gushing throats of the invisible performers. The long cones of the glittering icicles jettied from the nodding boughs as they swayed and swung to and fro as if beating time with their silver batons for the spirit orchestra; and the smouldering brands rose upright, and were metamor-

phosed into merry elves and fairies, who now joined in the mystic revels, and anon, mounting their bat-winged steeds, wheeled and were lost in the far-off depths of the woods.

As these shifting scenes and dissolving views passed before their entranced vision, Rozella murmured,—

“Elsie — dear Elsie, take courage ; for we shall soon be with you.”

“Put in the plough beam deep,” snored the farmer.

“He — O — he !” sung the sailor. “Put on every inch of canvas she will bear, and let her drive before the wind.”

“Yes,” grunted the bushcutter, “put the old stub in up to the heel.”

“I have come,” said the deacon, with his face drawn out in a satirical smile, “into this wilderness to restore liberty to the captives, and shall accomplish my mission and cut the cords by which they are bound, even if I have to cut my way through murderous councils and reeking scalps to reach them. And I have no doubt I shall so far succeed as to impress my auditory with the doctrine that resistance to Chocorua is obedience to the king.”

“Yes,” chimed in Pike, “we will continue the service of the king by the use of the first twang ;” at the same time bringing down his heavy iron pitchpipe upon the nose of the sleeping Pete Hardy, which made him snore a louder blast than usual. “Hold on ! that ain’t the right pitch ; sound again, and sing the following lines as an appropriate setpiece after the deacon’s weighty remarks :—

‘Threat ! what an empty vapor ’tis,
When in the drifting snow ;
Swift as an Indian arrow flies
From Cho-co-ru-a’s bow.’”

"Be jabbers," growled the Irishman, "and it's meself that's wid ye there; and it's the big shelaly they'll be afther catchin' upon the sconce of thim; and the divil a bit of shamrock the murtherin' rapscallions 'll see stuck in their faces when Ronsel O'Donnegan gets a chance to stop their botheration."

"Right," groaned the squire, suddenly jerking up one leg, "tie them down with this chain-lightning rheumatism which is burning my hip—that will make them smart."

"Some Smart!" shouted the sentinel, as daylight began to dawn, and following up his shout so frightfully that it made the whole woods ring and brought every soldier on his feet wide awake again.

"All right at last," cried the captain; and "All right," responded every soldier.

"Where is the sentinel?" inquired the captain, looking about the encampment.

"O, the wolf! the wolf!" screamed a dozen voices; and the next instant the same mysterious wolf they had seen the evening previous dashed through the encampment with open mouth and howling most hideously. So frightened were the whole party that no one thought of discharging his piece at him; and he galloped to the edge of the bushes and disappeared. All were frightened nearly out of their senses; and each man looked to ascertain if his priming was dry.

"Where is Smart?" asked one.

"The wolf has eaten him," replied another.

"We must call him," shouted a dozen voices; and the woods echoed and reëchoed with the name of Smart.

"Halloo, you noisy chaps!" answered he, directly at their feet, where he lay crouched down upon his elbow and hip again. "Can't you let me catch a nap, now that it is 'most daylight, since I have called you up in season?" asked he.

"You promised," said Pike, "to call us before any Indian or wolf should come within a hundred yards."

"So I did," replied Smart; "the wolf did not come within a hundred yards before you were all up."

"Well," replied Pike, "if he came that distance in so short a time, he must be a smart wolf."

"He is some smart," rejoined the boy, as he dropped again upon his elbow.

CHAPTER XXVI.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN ROZELLA AND CHOCORUA. — BATTLE AT BEAR CAMP
STREAM. — CAPTURE OF CHOCORUA.

THE breakfast was soon prepared and despatched, and the company commenced their march. Hard jokes were cracked by Smart upon their credulity ; for after mutual consultation they had arrived at the conclusion that the wolf which had been disturbing them during the night was some witch or enchantress. Most of them declared they had not once shut their eyes during the whole night ; and the farmer had to recount his ploughing, the deacon his preaching, and the sailor the craft with which he ran into the Indians. But Pete Hardy thought it must have been his nose which he ran into, for it still had a twang like a cable in a squall. The squire insisted that he had finally bound the spirits fast with rheumatic chain lightning ; and if so, they would stay bound a thousand years. But Pike declared that he it was who laid them all by the melodious strains of his music, and added that nothing else could lay such ghosts as they, for they were right smart.

"They were some smart," replied the sentinel. "But," continued he, "they were not laid lower than you were by the arrow 'from Cho-co-ru-a's bow ;'" which allusion seemed to touch the sore spot in Pike's breast ; and he chafed and nettled and fumed under it for some time.

They all supposed the encampment to have been enchanted by both good and evil spirits.

But the sun was now far up, and they, too, were far up among the hills; and as they hastened forward they came suddenly upon the spot where the Indians had encamped the previous night. The fires were still burning, though low; and there was also a hut of hemlock boughs sufficiently large and evidently used as a shelter for a horse, through one corner of which ran a small rivulet, while two trees at one side had served to support the cut grass which had been used as forage. The soldiers now broiled a little more beef, and, hastily devouring it, pushed on, Rozella taking the lead, as they expected to arrive soon at the head quarters of the Pequawketts.

When Rozella should discover the smoke of their wigwams she was to give the signal; and the whole company were to conceal themselves until she had advanced to and tried her eloquence upon Chocorua for the deliverance of the captives.

It was nearly noon when she discovered the encampment of the Pequawketts upon what is now called Bear Camp Stream in Albany, formerly Boston. She instantly gave the signal; and the whole company immediately concealed themselves in such a way as to be able to keep a close watch upon all the coming proceedings. Rozella walked deliberately towards the encampment, and, when within about twenty yards of the wigwam, found herself face to face with five muscular and swarthy Indians, who had as deliberately walked out to meet her. They commanded her to stop, although they did not attempt to seize her, as they knew her to be the same person whom they saw at the funeral of Wenane. At length one of them, advancing towards her, said more sternly, —

“The young white squaw can go no farther until she makes known her business.”

"I wish," answered Rozella, still walking towards the lodge, "to see your chief."

"For what purpose?" demanded her interrogator.

"If I am to confer with you," returned Rozella, "what is the need of my seeing the chief?"

They now stepped before her to prevent her farther advance; but as she continued resolutely to go forward, they gave way and allowed her to proceed. As she was approaching the lodge the savage who had hitherto officiated as spokesman again spoke, and offered, if she would advance no farther, to call the chief.

"Go," said Rozella, with queenly dignity, as she still continued to advance, and reached the entrance just as Chocorua made his appearance.

"Why is the Forest Queen here?" sternly asked he.

"I am here," answered Rozella, "for the release of my friend Elsie Tufton, her father, and sisters."

"Fool!" contemptuously sneered Chocorua; "did I not tell the white squaw, when I last walked with her to her father's house, that I had performed the last kind act of friendship I would ever show a paleface?"

"It is not a kind act or an act of friendship," replied Rozella, "that I ask; but it is justice, stern justice alone, for which I came hither."

"Murder a man's son," hissed the chief through his closed teeth, "take from him all he holds dear and all that makes life desirable, and then ask him in the name of justice not to take revenge! Will the white squaw leap into that rushing stream, and ask its angry waters in the name of justice not to swallow her up? How dare she be so reckless of her life as to approach the wigwam of the Pequawketts in a time like this? The war has already begun, and the time of peace past never to return; and when the young white squaw comes to the tent of the great chief and greater warrior, it is indeed bearding the angry lion in his den."

"Chocorua is not only a great chief but a great lion of the tribe of the Pequawketts, as I know full well," replied Rozella; "and I have come to take an innocent lamb from his jaws."

"As well might you take the corpse from the jaws of death," was the stern reply; "and I am death on the pale-faces. And," continued he, "it rejoiced my heart to make them break the path hither for my white war horse, upon which I sat, followed by my braves, while the white dogs went on foot."

"You are not death on the palefaces, then," interrupted another voice, "but death on the pale horse, with hell following after."

"Begone, puppy of the palefaces!" cried Chocorua, in great wrath, and adding, as he glanced at Rozella, "Why did you bring this yelping cur with you? For your protection, I suppose. Could I reach him, I would make him smart."

"Some smart," replied the boy, as he jumped back out of reach.

"Chocorua," asked Rozella, "are you not, lion as you are, satiated with the blood you have already drank?"

"I am for the present," replied the chief; "for is not the lamb in the tent still alive?"

"Why, then," asked Rozella, "should you keep her longer?"

"Does not the lion," answered the chief, "when he has devoured the dam and become satiated with blood, still retain its young for his further amusement?"

"Monster!" cried Rozella, "what mean you? I thought the honor of a woman, in the hands of an Indian, however deeply stained with the blood of the innocent and unoffending they might be, was safe and sacred."

"And the Forest Queen," returned Chocorua, "has not that fact to learn, for she has spoken the truth already."

"What is your meaning, then?" continued Rozella.

"To set her up for a target," replied the chief, with a hideous grin, "and make the arrows tear up the soft flesh by piccemeals, and then drop in the hot ashes and hear her cry out and scream."

"Infamous wretch!" indignantly exclaimed Rozella. "Chocorua is no longer a lion; for the lion devours his prey at once, and does not sport with the death agonies of his helpless victim. The corpse in the jaws of death is in an enviable position compared with that of her in this tent and in the jaws of Chocorua."

"Ay," responded Chocorua; "she is in the jaws of death, and his sharp teeth shall crush and craunch her bones into pumice, while her rich, warm blood shall drip from his mouth and run down over his broad, manly breast. Her blood will be sweeter to his taste than the honey dew of the summer flower is to the wandering bee; and her white flesh will be a morsel as much sweeter than the blood as the meat of the wild deer is better than the deadly hemlock ye steep to poison the only son of a chief."

Rozella could hardly restrain herself while the chief was speaking; and when he closed she approached still nearer to him and said,—

"Is it the demon now standing before me who talks of his broad, manly breast? That breast is harder than the granite mountain which rises before us, and it is blacker than the darkness of the infernal pit; and should but one of your poisonous fangs break her delicate skin and let out that pure and innocent blood it will be but a bitter draught to your depraved taste."

"Bitter?" angrily reiterated the chief.

"Ay," replied Rozella, scornfully and contemptuously, as she looked him in the face, "bitter as death itself."

So furiously flashed her eye, and so intense was the

scorn that curled her lip, that the chief thought her suddenly transformed into a supernatural being, and, in great alarm, shouted for his warriors to come to the rescue.

"Take her," cried he, as they approached, "and bind her with the others. Her blood shall flow before the sun goes down ; for she has forfeited all claim to my friendship or protection."

Half a dozen savages instantly dragged her into the lodge and tied her hand and foot with the other victims. The English had all the while been concealed but attentive observers of all that had passed ; and when Rozella was dragged into the lodge Captain Grovenor sternly ordered his men to advance and give no quarter. The Indians saw their approach, and, with their muskets in hand and their bows slung over their shoulders, rushed out to meet them. The Indians gave a scattering fire and then made for the rocks and trees ; but before they had reached their coverts three reached the goal of death. The others fired from behind the rocks and trees, and, as the English followed up, hastily retreated to other places of shelter. After the skirmish had continued nearly an hour, and resulted in the death of two of the English and six of their foes, the Indians, foreseeing that, unless they could escape to the mountain, they must be exterminated, resolved to make the desperate attempt, and at the same time wreak their vengeance upon the captives. Three of the most daring, in pursuance of this resolution, started at the same moment and took a wide circuit around the swamp into which they had been driven, and, when they had retreated sufficiently far to draw their pursuers out of sight of the lodge, ran back to it at their utmost speed to kill and scalp their captives previous to their retreat to the mountain ; but when they drew near the lodge they

were not only surprised to behold the captives all rejoicing in their freedom, but were astonished and frightened beyond all measure at the sight of a monstrous gray wolf, seated upon Chocorua's white war horse, which, at their appearance, commenced turning somersets on the back of the horse, and finally, with a long knife in its paw and howling most hideously, rode furiously upon them. Panic-struck, they ran for their lives, crying out in their terror, "The enchanted wolf of the forest — the wild spirit of the mountains!" The other Indians, hearing the outcry, took up and reëchoed the alarming intelligence, and fled in terror and dismay.

About half of the party of English returned to the lodge to await the arrival of the others; but these, with Captain Grovenor, had taken the track of Chocorua, determined never to return until his life should pay the penalty of the destruction of their captain's family at their hands. His trail led directly up the steep and lofty mountain in Albany that now bears his name. The soldiers soon caught sight of the old chief, vigorously ascending the steep cliffs far above their heads, and, resolved not to be outdone, as vigorously followed. Chocorua had taken the only path by which the mountain's peak was accessible, and there was no avenue of escape on the other side of the mountain; therefore, when he gained the summit, hotly pursued by the soldiers, and saw before him a sheer descent of hundreds of feet, whose precipitous sides were rough and jagged and whose terminus was lost in misty darkness, he saw that further retreat was impossible, and came to a stand.

"Jump," shouted Grovenor, "or we shoot."

"Shoot, then, if ye must," replied Chocorua; "for the warm life that throbs in this manly frame is the gift of the Great Spirit; and Chocorua is too faithful to his trust

to throw it away." Then, turning towards them and drawing himself up to his full height, he continued : " Let the paleface shoot if he will ; but let him hear before he strikes."

" Hear him," responded the soldiers ; " let the old dog speak and preach his own funeral sermon."

CHAPTER XXVII.

CHOCORUA'S DYING SPEECH. — HIS DEATH. — SPEECHES OF HIS CAPTORS,
EACH AFTER HIS OWN PECULIAR STYLE OF ORATORY.

"CHOCORUA," rejoined the chief, "is no dog ; for, had he been, he would have swallowed your insults and your cruel murders without daring to fasten his teeth upon such bloody wolves as ye are or revenging his many wrongs. Neither will he preach his own funeral sermon ; for he is not used, like the whining whelps before him, to preaching peace and deliverance to the down-trodden and oppressed while his throat is parched and dry with thirst for their blood. A base pack of hypocrites are ye, who prate about light, and yet do every conceivable deed that the blackness of darkness can conceal. Neither will it be necessary for the last brave sagamore of the Pequawketts to preach his own funeral sermon ; for, while this eternal mountain stands pointing to the heavens, it will tell of this foul deed of treachery and slaughter. Its towering summit, baptized in the red man's blood and ordained by the cloudy hand that Heaven lays upon its brow, shall do the preaching of Chocorua when your infamous names shall be blasted by the breath of justice and forgotten, or, if held in remembrance, recalled only to be despised and execrated. Then shall the cry of blood from the sacrificial altar of this mountain go up to Heaven, and the rocks, which to-day are softer than your petrified

hearts, melt in the fierce fires of their own wrath. The mouths of the crags shall whisper it to the zephyrs of morning; and the yawning gulfs shall belch it forth to the blasts of evening; and the glistening crystal eyes of the rocks shall reflect it to the passer by, and weep scalding tears of remorse and shame. Your usurping feet have marched with blighting step over the lands of our inheritance and the graves of our fathers. To our entreaties ye have turned a deaf ear, and to our solemn compacts ye have proved faithless. To the red man ye have been but a scourge and a curse. Ye have robbed him of his senses with your firewater, and of his hunting grounds by your parchments. Ye said we were all brothers, and as brothers we would live and thrive together; and some of our older sachems, like the great Passaconaway, and his son Wannalancet of the Pennacooks, and the worthy Massasoit, and Alexander of the Wampanoags, were so credulous as to believe you. But after gaining their confidence and friendship you robbed them, not only of the lands upon which they lived, but of the very air they breathed and the light by which they walked.

"You compassed not only sea and land, but the heavens themselves, to effect their robbery. Thus cajoled and cheated out of all they possessed, they had nothing left to do but to turn their sorrowing faces to the earth, from whence they came. And so, with their gray hairs trailing over their aged and grief-furrowed cheeks, as if to hide their tears from the glaring eyes of their relentless persecutors, they died.

"Not satisfied with this, you pushed your war of extermination far up through these fertile valleys by yonder silvery waters lying underneath the mountain's jutting brow, like the eye of earth fringed by the protecting lashes of the forest trees. Here, with these sacred waters, which are the smile of the Great Spirit, ye have sacrilegiously

mingled the blood of my fathers. Here fell Paugus, whose office and mantle, though I buried the hatchet and smoked the calumet of peace with the treacherous palefaces, has fallen on my unworthy shoulders. But, thanks to the Great Spirit, I stand here to-day to wipe out the foul blot brought upon the name of Paugus ; and if my body is a sufficient sacrifice to redeem my faithlessness to him, I willingly offer it ; or if my blood will wash out the disgrace I have brought upon his name, it shall run freely.

“ ’Twas but around yonder point of the Ossipee, where the waters glisten in the sun, that great Paugus fell, and with him the glory and renown of the Pequawketts. At that fall the angry clouds of heaven, black and lowering, rushed down around the murdered corpse, and the deafening thunders shook the guilty earth as the lightnings leaped from cliff to cliff along the mountain sides. Would that Chocorua could have fallen upon the same spot ! for ’tis sacred ground. But my bosom lightens and my heart leaps with joy to think that I fall so near it. But with me falls the last chief of the Pequawketts. I have no successor, for ye have slain Wenane before me. My death will be the red man’s gain ; for justice falls not with Chocorua, nor will vengeance sleep with his bones. Pometacone, the King of the Wampanoags, still lives ; and Taurus, whose base treatment of the Forest Queen no one despises more heartily than myself, has gone to the St. Francis tribe to rally the French forces under the Marquis de Vaudrieul, together with the Nepissins and the Aberdines ; and these, under the command of King Philip, will soon rid the land of such bloodthirsty wolves as ye are. Then Waldron, of whom ye boast so much, will share the fate of him whose tainted blood runs in his veins, and for whose infamous treachery in deceiving and selling into slavery two hundred of the brave Ossipees he ultimately lost his life. So shall it be with his son. That night he

left for Cape Breton he boasted that from his cradle he had fed on tears and been nurtured on blood — the food of the savage beasts of the forest. If, then, like a beast he has fed and fattened, like a beast shall he be slain, and like a beast shall his unburied body be left to feed and fatten the loathsome birds of prey whose flagging wings are closely folded over the valley of corruption. And the same stern justice shall be meted out to Vaughan, Moulton, and Harmon, who stole away like lurking assassins to the happy band at Norridgewock and brutally murdered them, together with their good father, Ralle, the evangelist. There he had gathered and endeavored to make good Christians of those who were under his charge, and who became his faithful followers and disciples. There the little church was seen with its cross rising amid the forest trees, and there over the door swung out the banner of love. Upon that banner were the cross, and the bow and arrow of the red man. The cross declared to the world that blood enough had already been spilt for its redemption ; the bow was a sign that the earth should nevermore be deluged by a flood of human gore ; and the arrows, pointing to the cross, made plain to all eyes the sharp and piercing pains with which their salvation had been purchased. There perpetually went up the offerings of prayer and praise ; and hardly had the morning oblation died away ere the evening vesper was heard mingling and rising with the ascending orison.

“Westbrook had previously stolen the strong box of Ralle, and used the private papers and letters he found therein to excite the people to massacre him ; and Moulton and Harmon were the accursed instruments to strike the final blow. The good priest rushed to the foot of the cross to save his flock by the sacrifice of himself ; and they in turn rallied around him, and formed a breastwork of their bodies for his defence ; and both priest and peo-

ple fell willing sacrifices for a common cause. And the scalp of the murdered father, with those of eighty Indians, were borne away from the foot of that cross still reeking in the warm blood of the slaughtered victims, and the church, with the cross and flag, consumed by the raging flames. Think ye the ears of the Great Spirit heard not their dying cries? Think ye that he will not strengthen the arm of the red man that he may avenge his wrongs? If ye do not believe in his almighty power, tremble; and if ye do believe, then tremble the more, for your destruction is sure and speedy. But I see that some of you have thrown down your arms. Ye need not be afraid to kill, for Chocorua is not afraid to die. Behind yon western cloud linger the white-winged spirits upon the fleet steeds of the sky to convey him to the happy hunting grounds whither his only son has just gone, and where usurpers and murderers like yourselves can never come. And although this body may fall into the dark gulf now yawning beneath me, yet the spirit shall pass safely over it upon the bridge of faith, and in full life and perfect liberty run up its starry pathway, bounding homeward to the Great Spirit who gave it. And now Chocorua with his dying breath curses you; and the land of which you have robbed him shall be accursed for your sakes. Chocorua has finished; and his foes may now strike."

"Ready!" commanded the captain; and, as the click of the guns was heard, the old chief, raising himself to his full height, replied, —

"I am."

"Aim!" continued the captain.

"At me," responded the undaunted chief.

And, at the word "Fire!" three guns were discharged, and the lifeless body of the last chief of the Pequawkets, pierced by three balls, fell headlong over the precipice and disappeared in the gloomy gulf below. For a moment

all around, above, and beneath was as still as the deep grave of the fallen chief; and then Captain Grovenor, turning to the men who had not discharged their pieces, asked, in a stern voice, —

“Why did you disobey my orders?”

No reply was made; but there stood the Irishman with a long evergreen in his hand, extending it over the edge of the dark chasm; the farmer claspings with both hands two jagged limbs of a scrub oak, as if he were holding a plough; the sailor was lashing the limbs of another small tree closely around its trunk, as if he had taken in his sails and was lying at anchor; while the bushcutter was standing by another tree, on whose fork he had suspended a crooked stick.”

The captain, observing the cold and unsympathizing looks of these men, seemed to think some apology necessary for the act just committed, and in a husky voice exclaimed, —

“As for me, I fired to silence the groans of my massacred family, and to see if his running blood would not cleanse my mind of the memory of the loss I have sustained.”

“And I,” said Pike, “for the purpose of healing this smarting wound in my breast, and to see what key the crack of a musket would give in this mountain air.”

“And I,” chimed in the deacon, “for the glory of my mission, and for the purpose of showing that revenge and punishment are better than forgiveness and mercy; for it is written, ‘Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed;’ and, ‘He that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword.’ Moreover, we must obey our rulers.”

“All who have obeyed,” said the captain, “have a good reason for so doing; but what can these other crazy fellows say for themselves?” And as he thus spoke the cap-

tain, thinking the Irishman the weakest of the disaffected band, and therefore the safest on whom to commence the attack, continued, "Ronsel O'Donnegan, how do you account for your cowardly conduct?"

"Faith," responded Ronsel, "and isn't it meself that is as good a rebel as the bloodiest of ye? I stood resting on the breech of my gun, and the muzzle of the crayther upon the toe of me, and stood up to the fight as bould as a cockerel, — I did, — until the ould chief spoke of the cross, and the mass, and the vespers; and then it was meself that just drew back the feet of me, and gave the bloody pace a mithy toss down the mountain into the bottomless pit below. And there may the foul-mouthed old pace lay until the time comes for her to be baten into a ploughshare for the farmer here. Afther that I jist stooped down and broke me a bit of the shamrock ye see here, and hild it out to the ould chief as a token that, for one, Ronsel O'Donnegan bore no ill till him. And the text that Dacon Stone has jist been expounding from his own muzzle and the muzzle of the gun of him struck Ronsel O'Donnegan as quite unlike a certhin other sermon and from another mountain. And it seems to Ronsel that the text furnished, blood for blood, is only declaratory of what sort of an act would natherally follow one which was the like of it, as the dacon has jist proved with the gun of him, and is not a command to direct a good Christian. Sure an if 'twas carried out as he explains it wouldn't ivery mother's son of us lose the life of him, and that soon? And whin the turn of the last of us came wouldn't he have to be his own witness, judge and jury, hangman and prisoner, as well as all the audience to teach the example to? And Captain Grovenor would think another man crazy when he saw him string himself up betwane the heavens and the earth, and dancing upon nothing to the tune of mercy, whilst the brazes of heaven played a most

ilegant death march to the swate harmony of the law of love and Dacon Stone."

"And as for me," said the farmer, "when Chocorua spoke of their lands upon which we had trespassed, and out of which we had cheated his people, and which we were now ploughing and cultivating for our own benefit, I knew it was all true, every mite of it; so I just unhitched my team and left my plough in the furrow; and there it shall rust and rot before I turn another inch of soil unless it is bought and paid for."

"The farmer has spoken my mind exactly," said the bushcutter; "and, as the stub scythe prepares the ground for the plough, every other plough shall rot with the farmer's before my scythe clears the way for it, until the whole field is clear and smooth, and every thing fixed as it should be. So I have hung the old concern up there in the tree; and it now hangs just to suit me."

"And I," cried the sailor, "found I couldn't navigate my craft amid the breakers of his overwhelming argument without being thrown on my beam ends by the gale of his eloquence. So I furled my sails and threw out my best bower; and here I am, determined never to cruise in these latitudes again; for I am out of soundings, my chart is gone, and I have lost my bearings altogether."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ATTACK BY THE WOLVES UPON THE ENGLISH IN THE LODGE. — INVOCATION OF THE ENCHANTED WOLF. — HE DISPERSES THE GENUINE SPECIES. — RETURN OF THE ENGLISH, AND THEIR DETERMINATION AND APPOINTMENT OF A MEETING TO RAISE THE ENCHANTED WOLF THEMSELVES.

By this time Captain Grovenor and his coadjutors Stone and Pike were very anxious to leave this exceedingly high mountain ; for they found they could no more intimidate their comrades for not shooting a man whom they could easily have taken alive than they could have tempted them to fall down and worship their bloody idol code, even if, like their great progenitor of old, they had offered them all before them, and of which they were not the lawful owners nor the rightful possessors. So the captain gave the command to countermarch, and sadly, though not slowly, they made their way back to the lodge of the Pequawketts. As night had now set in, it was almost impossible to keep the path by which they had ascended, and it was late ere they reached the wigwam. While they were making all possible haste on their descent, they were suddenly startled by the loud "who" of what seemed to be an owl ; but as they thought they detected in its dismal hoot something akin to the tones of a human voice, and fearful it was the signal of their ambushed foes, they suddenly left the path and made for the bushes. They

had gone but a few rods when they were more startled than ever by the ringing laugh of Elsie and Rozella.

"Well," exclaimed Captain Grovenor, as he sprang back into the path, "you must have had some practice if you can imitate an owl as well as that."

"We have seen some," replied Elsie, "and have taken a few lessons."

"Yes," added Pike, who had run the farthest into the bushes and was the last to regain the path; "a smart business, I should think, for young ladies to be imitating owls."

"Some smart," responded a voice directly behind them; and, turning, there lay Smart in his old and favorite position.

"How far is it to the wigwam?" inquired the deacon.

"Only a few rods," answered Rozella. "We waited for your return until we became so impatient that we started off to meet you."

"And you would have been more impatient," said Pike, "before you had reached the top of the mountain where we have been, and where we killed that old dog of a chief, Chocorua."

"Good!" cried Smart.

"How glad I am," said Elsie, "to hear that he is no more!"

"I am sorry!" exclaimed Rozella; "for Chocorua was a great chief and a superior man. Could you not have taken him alive? Perhaps he would have become peaceable and friendly again; or, if not, he might have been retained until the close of the war, and then sent to some section of the country where he could pass the rest of his life in quiet and tranquillity."

"Yes," said Captain Grovenor, with a sneer, "there is plenty of sympathy for the slain savage now, but none for my poor wife and children, whom he so inhumanly de-

stroyed, and whose half-consumed bodies are lying still unburied amid the remains of my once pleasant dwelling."

Rozella felt her dignity a little infringed upon by this severe remark, and replied, tartly,—

"Captain Grovenor, here are twenty living witnesses in this hitherto unexplored wilderness, whose every breath proves your asseveration alike uncalled for and unfounded. For what have we taken this perilous journey to these mountains and into the very heart of the wilderness? Would persons like these of whom our little band is composed be likely to take a long journey in the winter season, sleeping in the open air and subsisting upon food such as you would scarcely offer your dog, merely for the pleasure or novelty of the undertaking?"

"I do not impugn the motives of any one of the gallant little band now before me," replied the captain. "And I can say more than that. I am under a thousand obligations to them for the promptness with which they rallied to avenge the murder of my wife and children. Still there was a double motive in their minds; for they wished, not only to rid the land of this savage murderer, but to recapture your dear friend Elsie and the other members of the family. This last object may have prompted you more than the destruction of Chocorua; for, if not, why do you regret his death? We had him in our power; and why not slay him? Now the settlers can rest safe and secure from his tomahawk or his torch. We have served him no worse than he served our friends and would do again were he alive."

"Again," replied Rozella, "I must inform you, Captain Grovenor, that you labor under a mistake. In the first place, there was no twofold motive in the rallying of the company. Had not the company already assembled, with their knapsacks on and guns in hand, ready for the start, when the runner returned, while I was pleading with my

father and yourself that I might accompany the expedition? And then it was, and not till then, that I mentioned the exposure and suffering of Elsie as an additional inducement why permission should be granted. Chocorua was in your power, as you have acknowledged; and, if so, why should you kill him? While he was out of your reach and your own life was in danger there was some reason, as the taking up arms in self-defence of the Quakers at Cocheco testifies, for his destruction; but, that danger removed, the killing him is downright murder. And as to the assertion that he would have served us and our friends, had they been in his power, as we have served him, the fact that Elsie, her father, and sisters were in his power two days, unharmed, is sufficient proof to the contrary, thus far, whatever their final end might have been."

By this time they had reached the lodge, and the whole company gathered around to hear the discussion. As she closed, some demonstrations, both of concurrence and non-concurrence in her views, were manifested. Reference was then made to the last speech of Chocorua, and all acknowledged him to have been a man having an extensive knowledge of the history of the difficulties which had arisen between his people and the English, and that his eloquence had placed the subject of the red man's wrongs and injuries in a light in which they had never before viewed it.

The deacon, seeing the turn the affair seemed taking, and witnessing the complete discomfiture of the captain, and by the adroit use of his own arguments, now rushed gallantly to the rescue, and poured in a few more rounds in the shape of sundry texts, which he supposed would settle the whole matter.

"I would invite the attention of the young woman," said the deacon, "to the account of the vengeance of Gideon on the men of Succoth, and to Jephthah's slaughter of the

Ephraimites and the sacrifice of his own daughter, as well as to numerous other cases mentioned in the Old Testament. And the New Testament declares that the magistrate beareth not the sword in vain."

"And is it not written," replied Rozella, "that mercy is better than sacrifice, and that we should love and forgive our enemies, and pray for them that curse us and despitefully use us?"

"I did forgive him," replied the deacon, "and prayed for him, too, before I shot him. But the redskinned heathen would never have repented; so I thought I might just as well send him over his long journey now as wait longer."

"In the first place," retorted Rozella, "it shows what faith you have in the efficacy of your own prayers to go through the mockery of praying for one who, you say, you knew would never repent. And would you not consider it an insult were I to ask you to forgive an enemy and then kill him for the very offence for which I prayed he might be forgiven?"

"He prayed for him," interrupted Elsie, "with the gun of his mouth, and preyed upon him with the mouth of his gun. Besides," continued Elsie, "it does not look much like heathenism to hear a man talk as Ronsel says he did about the little church, Father Ralle, and the cross."

"He was cunning," said the deacon, with a wise look; "desput cunning."

"And a man of powerful intellect," pursued Rozella, "as his speech sufficiently proves; for it seems none of you could answer it."

"Well," said the deacon, "was it not manly in us to meet him on his own ground and conquer and slay him?"

"It may be, according to your ideas of manliness," replied Rozella, "manly to take revenge; but it is godlike to forgive."

Pete Hardy here announced supper; and the captain

and the deacon were greatly relieved to hear it. All sat down upon the ground in the old Indian wigwam, and the captain then gave a more full and precise account of the scene attending the death of Chocorua than that portion of the company that had remained at the lodge had yet heard. He then called upon Squire Langdell for an account of the doings at the lodge during their absence.

The squire informed him that when they entered the lodge, after the retreat of the savages, they found four squaws and one pappoose. That the enchanted wolf of the forest, or the wild spirit of the mountains, as the Indians called him, had appeared in the midst of the fight mounted upon Chocorua's horse, and, entering the lodge with a long knife in his paw, cut the bands with which the captives were confined, and so frightened the squaws that they ran screaming and shouting from the encampment, declaring that they would go down the lake to the Ossipees, and all disappeared. That the wolf again mounted the horse; and when the Indians came back to slaughter the captives before their final departure, he drove them back knife in hand. It was therefore evident that, had not the wolf come to the rescue, the expedition would have been fruitless and all their efforts for the release of the Tufton family unavailing. When the Indians disappeared the wolf vanished also, but no one knew whither. They had then dug graves and buried the two white men who had fallen; but the bodies of the Indians were still unburied, as they presumed their companions would return and bury them. No one had taken any scalps save Smart, who came in last from the swamp with three, declaring that he thought he must be some smart to drop so many redskins with his own gun. These three, with those they had not scalped and including the chief, would make ten savages who had fallen in one day — which he thought was a pretty fair day's work.

"Only five left out of the fifteen," said the captain ; "that will do for one day, sure enough."

The time to turn in had now arrived, and all agreed that Smart should have a chance to sleep in his turn ; and as there was no fear that the Indians would return, and, moreover, as Chocorua and his avenging Stillshot were both stilled forever, even Pike consented to stand sentinel for a part of the night.

While the preparations for that duty were in progress Elsie related the incidents of their capture as follows : The Indians came upon them in the dead of night, and, breaking down the door, rushed in, and, hardly allowing them time to dress, hurried them away through the cold and furious storm. They marched on through the forest until they came to the encampment before mentioned, when they took their first meal for the day. It consisted of the wild meat, portions of which were found by the English on their arrival at this place, and several loaves of bread stolen from their house.

From this place they were compelled to break the path for Chocorua and his followers through the deep snow ; and when they arrived at the lodge they had a few pieces of meat thrown at them as though they had been dogs, and were then tied with the barks as they had been found. What their fate would have been ultimately, had they not been rescued, they were unable to say ; but in all probability they would have been taken to Canada, as hundreds of others had been, and sold to the French. But the joy which they all felt when they heard the voice of Rozella — that sweet angel of mercy to the poor and of hope to the captive — was utterly indescribable.

The sentries were now posted ; and the first watch passed quietly, there being no fear of danger either from the Indians or from the mysterious wolf. The enchanted wolf had always borne a conspicuous part in the legends

and traditions of the Indians, who supposed the mountains to be inhabited by spirits, and that these appeared in time of war, and, assuming the form of whatever animal best suited their convenience, espoused whichever cause was in the right. As the English were firm believers in witches and satanic manifestations, they did not altogether discredit this Indian superstition ; and, although no one could give any satisfactory reason for his faith concerning him, yet, as he had fought on their side, they thought it best not to be too inquisitive, and so let the matter rest as they found it.

The sentinels for the second watch consisted of Hardy, Pike, and a man from Merry Meeting named Rogers. They were highly elated with their day's work ; and as they supposed their blazing camp fires would deter the approach of all enemies, they swaggered about with so admirable an air of courage as to almost impose upon even themselves. But soon the *bona fide* wolves began to howl on the mountains, but so far off that they did not fear their nearer approach. But the wolves had scented the blood of the fallen and yet unburied Indians, and, made bold and excited by the aroma thus wafted upon the evening breeze, ventured a still nearer approach. The sentries, unwilling to disturb the sleepers, endeavored to frighten them away by making loud outcries, but to no purpose ; for soon in the opposite direction they beheld another large pack of the same ferocious animals rushing in a dense mass from the adjacent swamp. And now to the fierce and discordant treble of the wolves was added the growling sub-bass of the black bear, accompanied by the wild "who" of the owl, until the woods and mountains seemed vocal with the awful concert which woke their sleeping echoes ; and the very rocks seemed to vibrate to the supernatural harmony of a band of mountain spirits.

Pike endeavored to keep up his courage by bragging lustily, reminding his companions that he had that very day put a bullet through the head of an Indian chief, and he didn't fear the wolves — not he ; but his trembling voice belied his big words, and did not go far to reassure his discerning comrades.

But the beasts, having smelt blood, were determined to taste it, and doubtless thought they had as good a right to do so as their brother bipeds. They had now approached so near that the sentries could plainly hear their gnashing teeth, and see their glaring eyes and hot breath as it issued in vapory volumes from their gaping jaws. Every time Pike passed his beat he drew somewhat nearer to the lodge, that he might be able to make good his retreat in case his valuable life should be threatened by a sudden rush of the howling foe. Soon the fiery eyeball of a monstrous wolf glared full in his view over the body of a fallen tree ; and Pike, satisfied with the proximity the fierce animal had already attained, did not wait to cultivate a nearer acquaintance, but leaped in flying bounds for the lodge, into which he disappeared with a celerity that would have astonished an antelope. The others stood their ground until they had discharged their guns and brought down two of the foremost wolves ; but as this did not seem to delay for an instant the charge of the succeeding platoon, they too retreated to the wigwam. By this time Pike had aroused the sleeping company, who were now up and armed ; and as they looked from the chinks and crevices of the lodge, the woods seemed all on fire with the flashing eyes of a thousand wolves gleaming in the darkness on every side. They shot a few of them ; but this only served to madden the rest into greater fury, and for every one that fell another was ready to take his place.

"Why, in the name of mercy," cried Pike, "don't the enchanted wolf come to our assistance? If he has forsaken us we shall all be destroyed to a man."

"Where is Some Smart?" was now the general inquiry.

"There," replied one, pointing to an old blanket behind the chimney. They ran to the place, and, awaking him, begged him to get up at once and assist them in destroying the wolves or they must all be devoured.

"I am too sleepy," yawned Some; "and, besides, I never meddle with such small fry."

"But what can we do?" said they.

"Call up the enchanted wolf," replied Some; "he will clear them off in quick time."

"How shall we call him up?" was now the query.

"I'll tell you," answered Some, "if you will let me sleep afterwards without disturbance."

"Well," he continued, as soon as his proposition was agreed to, "you must all march around the lodge three times with your eyes shut, and sing as follows:—

Enchanted wolf, or spirit, come!
And show thy power, mysterious one!

and he will appear." And down he threw himself behind the chimney as before.

By this time the wolves were scratching and snapping at every part of the lodge, and one or two were upon its top. As they completed their third round they heard, to their inexpressible joy, the well-known hideous howl of the enchanted wolf proceeding from the roof of the lodge. So fearful and unearthly was the howl, and so unlike that of all the others was its ringing cry, that the infernal din of all the others was hushed at once as by the voice of their commander-in-chief.

Those upon the roof jumped down as he appeared; and at the next instant the company inside saw him leap down

into the raging pack below him, holding in his paws an enormous firebrand, one end of which was blazing and crackling as he whirled it round his head. As he struck the ground he thrust his fiery torch full into the mouth of the wolf nearest him, whereupon the others, blinded and bewildered by the blazing brand, and frightened by the distressed yells of their agonized companion, who had "grabbed the subject," but was glad to drop it as quickly, started back, and the next moment were seen running at full speed for the mountain, making the woods ring with their infernal cries, while close in their rear in hot pursuit followed the enchanted wolf, still swinging aloft his meteor brand, and howling so terribly that the woods seemed filled from centre to circumference with the hideous outcry. The joy and rejoicing within the lodge at so speedy and complete a discomfiture of their dreaded foes by their formidable ally were unbounded, and formed a strong contrast to the frightful uproar without. They would have roused Smart to witness the scene but for their promise not to disturb him ; and, reflecting that he must be quite exhausted by his previous watchings and needed rest, they suffered him to sleep.

By this time Aurora had begun to throw up her streaming rockets as a signal to the world that the great centre piece was about to be fired ; and in the camp the word was passed around that daylight was at hand, and the whole party issued out into the morning air. All now began to discuss the mystery of the enchanted wolf ; and the opinions given concerning him were as various as the givers.

"He is," said Rozella, "the imbodiment of all that is pleasing to ourselves and of all that is terrible to our enemies. He has been, during our march through the wilderness, a pillar of fire by night and a guiding cloud by day."

"He is terrible," exclaimed the deacon, "as an army."

"He turned a handsome furrow, any how," said the farmer, "with his redhot ploughshare, through those howling devils."

"He mowed them down," said the bushcutter, "in a way that made me think of my old stub scythe."

"That's a fact," added the sailor; "he run 'em under in as gallant a style as ever was done by sea or by land."

"And," cried Elsie, "he didn't leave so much as a buoy to mark the spot."

"Yes, yes," responded Pike; "he went into them with his pitch pipe, and changed the key, and made them sing a different tune, in double quick time, and in short, particular metre."

"You mean, rather," resumed Elsie, "that he pitched into their pipes, or into one of them at least, and played a solo on the squalltera which didn't sound much like the dulcina."

"Any way," returned Pike, "it was a pretty smart operation."

"It was some smart," put in a voice from under the blanket; and the next moment Smart, kicking the blanket across the tent, sprang up and asked what all the disturbance meant.

"Meant!" replied Pike; "if you had seen the glowing fireballs which we saw you would have thought it meant something. There were more than a thousand of them; and the smallest one of the lot had a mouth that would have swallowed you at one gulp before you had got within hailing distance of it."

"No doubt," rejoined Smart, "I should have edged up close to the wigwam before they were within half a mile of me, and then cut and run for my life without stopping to discharge my piece at them."

"I guess you would, too," replied Pike; "for you were so awfully frightened that you didn't dare to put your

neck out from under your blanket till the danger was over."

"And I never would have taken it out," retorted Smart, "if it had to carry such a cowardly head as yours."

Pike was about to reply, when Rozella reminded him that it was Smart who gave them directions how to bring the enchanted wolf, but for whose assistance they must all have been destroyed.

Further conversation was now suspended by Captain Grovenor's giving the order for the company to march; and they started on their return. They had thirty miles of hard travelling before them, and they wished, if possible, to reach their homes before they slept; and, for the further expediting of their journey, the horse of the old chief was ridden by two ladies in turn, which arrangement aided their progress materially. Nothing of particular interest took place during the march, but they beguiled the way by conversation, jokes, and laughter, in which all took a part; even the deacon's starched face occasionally puckering up into a shape which it was hard to say most resembled laughing or crying. Some Smart took his old place at the side of Rozella, who soon commenced questioning him concerning the enchanted wolf. In reply, he informed her that he had spent some time with the Indians, and had learned of them how to raise the spirit. Any twelve persons could raise him generally, though he would not always come at their bidding. When they marched round the room in the manner he had directed the past night they generally saw the wolf. He never changed his form in the sight of any human being; but, after he appeared in the form of a wolf, if they had a small box for him to sit on, and then, inverting a barrel over him sufficiently high not to touch his head, marched three times around the room, he would pass through three transformations. But, in order that this

result should follow, it was necessary that all those present should be of the same color ; though of what particular color was of no consequence.

"Well," returned Rozella, "we will try it some time, and see what other forms he will assume."

When the company halted for dinner Rozella made known what she had learned respecting the mysterious wolf ; and all the company shared in her curiosity to see the different shapes he would assume and through what transformations he would pass. Accordingly, an evening was appointed about a fortnight from that time, for the reason that some of the company were obliged to be absent on business until then ; and the little band again took up their line of march.

As they neared their several homes they parted company, some taking one road and some another, while others struck off through the clearings or through the woods. But no one could tell when or where Smart had left the company ; for, although they knew he was not there, that was the extent of their knowledge. When they reached the lane that led over the causeway to Mr. Tufton's they exchanged parting salutations with the family, and receiving the assurance from them, in answer to their request, that they would not fail to be present at the raising of the wolf, passed on.

When Squire Langdell, Rozella, and Pike entered their home there was a general shout of congratulation on both sides. Little Owega was rejoiced beyond measure to see her long-absent mistress, and had a great deal to say about her visit, during Rozella's absence, to a young friend in the other part of the settlement. They then inquired how the party had succeeded ; and both Mrs. Langdell and Owega were surprised as well as rejoiced to hear of its success. Rozella then gave a brief rehearsal of the principal incidents of the journey, dwelling particularly

on the phenomenon of the enchanted wolf, and ended by informing them that she had learned how to raise him from a fine young man, named Smart, who had accompanied her all the way, and to whom she had become particularly attached.

"Miss Rozella," asked Owega, "what will Captain Waldron say to that?"

"O," replied Rozella, laughing, "he is but a lad, and too young to interfere with the claims of Captain Waldron. He is just about a match for you, Owega."

"O, how glad I am to hear that!" exclaimed Owega, in her ringing tones of laughter. "I am dying to see him already. Where does he live?"

"Somewhere in the settlement," answered Rozella, "though he seemed unwilling to tell where; so I did not press the inquiry."

"But why," said Mrs. Langdell, "did you not invite him to call on us?"

"I did so, of course," replied Rozella, "and he is coming a week from Monday night to assist in raising the wolf."

"O," shouted Owega, "doubly good! for I shall not only see Smart, but see the wolf raised too."

"Not quite so fast," returned Rozella. "He said the wolf would not appear if there were persons of different color present."

At this announcement Owega lost all her hilarity in a moment, and the tears stood in her eyes.

"Nonsense!" cried Rozella; "you shall see Some Smart, if you cannot be present when the wolf is raised."

"But what if he should not be present," said Mrs. Langdell, "at the appointed time."

"O," replied Rozella, "we can raise the wolf without him; for he has let me into the whole secret."

"Yes," cried Owega, again pouting; "but in that case I shall not see the wolf raised, nor see Some Smart either."

Miss Rozella will give me no chance either way. I won't stay here. I'll go off somewhere before the time comes, where I can have a better chance. If I'd staid with the Ossipees they would have done better by me than that ; for long before this they would have given me some swift, straight arrow for my bow."

"The quiver of the Ossipees," replied Rozella, "does not contain many swift, straight arrows at present. It was pretty thoroughly exhausted by old Major Waldron when he took two hundred of them at once, and sold part of them and hung the rest ; and those whom he sold were the identical Indians who on their return crossed out their accounts with Major Waldron by taking his life."

"I hope," replied Owega, "they won't serve the young captain so."

Rozella shuddered and seemed inclined to cease from further conversation, but finally told Owega that she might stay at home the night of the gathering, remaining up stairs while the wolf was being raised, and they would call her down the moment he disappeared.

CHAPTER XXIX.

REJOICING OF THE SETTLERS AT THE DEATH OF CHOCORUA. — MEETING AND SUCCESS OF THE INHABITANTS IN RAISING THE WOLF. — INCIDENTS OF THE EVENING, AND SONG.

IN the interval between the time of this conversation and the evening of the great wolf party, as the gathering was termed, all the towns from Dover to Merry Meeting Bay were filled, not only with rejoicings over the death of the dreaded and hated Chocorua, but with wonder and astonishment at the part taken in the affray by the mysterious wolf. All, far and near, were extremely anxious to get a sight at the strange animal; and Owega, in particular, had had several sharp conflicts with Rozella, and went so far as to almost resort to blows because she would not grant her permission to be present when he was to be raised. Rozella told her that those who were coming wished to see the wolf, and not Owega; and there would be no right nor propriety in allowing one person to break up, by their presence, the great object of the meeting; and she need say nothing further about it.

On the appointed evening Owega showed so much temper and exhibited so many of the worse traits of the Indian character that Rozella came to the determination to send her to one of their neighbors to pass the evening with an old lady who was too infirm to attend the party. When the company began to assemble Owega threw a

shawl over her head, and went out sulking and muttering to herself. The only words Rozella could catch were to the effect that Rozella might have Some Smart if she wanted him ; and if two beaux were not enough for her, she hoped she would throw out her net and catch more ; and, if her net got so full as to break and let them out, she could set another wolf trap. The company still continued to pour in, and in so much greater numbers than had been anticipated that they filled not only the old kitchen, which was the favorite room in those days, but also the parlor, which was only opened on unusual occasions. They occupied the time in discourse concerning ghosts, goblins, and witchcraft in all its types and phases, from the time of Moses to the manifestations at Salem. Still Smart failed to make his appearance ; and the party, who had waited two hours for him, began to grow not only impatient, but irritable, and none more so than Rozella. She had supposed, from his seeming attachment to her while on their late expedition, that he would not fail to be among the first to be present ; and she knew not what to think of his absence. At last it was proposed that they should attempt to raise the wolf without him ; "For," said they, "we raised him before without his assistance ; and why not now ?"

The words necessary to be repeated had been learned by all who had not previously heard them ; and, after having arranged the box and barrel according to the directions given by Rozella, the whole company stood up and marched round the room, repeating, —

Enchanted wolf or spirit, come!
And prove thy power, mysterious one !

After they had passed three times around the room all stopped and looked at each other inquiringly, as much as to say, "What shall we do next?"

At length the deacon broke the silence by remarking that he had been struck with an impression that they hadn't faith enough.

"Hush!" whispered Elsie; "you will soon be struck with a deeper impression yet."

At this moment a loud scratch, and a deep, jarring growl, were heard at the door, whereat all present turned pale, and Pike tottered to a seat and called for water.

"Will some one open the door?" asked Rozella.

"We dare not," was the general response.

"Deacon," said Rozella, "will you be good enough to open the door?"

As she spoke a still louder and fiercer growl was heard; and the deacon was instantly taken with a weakness in the knees and dropped into a chair by the side of Pike, and, with a convulsive grab at the tumbler of water which was still in Pike's shaking hand, exclaimed, "O mercy! we've raised something; but whether it is the wolf or the devil who knows?"

Rozella now ventured to open the door a little way, when a huge paw was thrust through the opening and the door forced from her grasp with such violence as nearly to throw her down, and in bounded an enormous wolf. He advanced towards the box and barrel, and set up a howl that brought even Pike and the deacon to their feet, while the crockery and the tin pans rattled as if shaken by the discharge of a cannon. The entire company were now in an awful panic; for they dared not attack their mysterious guest, and yet knew no method of ridding themselves of his unwelcome presence.

"How," cried the deacon, addressing Rozella, "can we lay this evil spirit, as he seems to be to-night? — for instead of raising the friendly wolf which assisted us against the Indians, we have raised the evil one himself."

"Alas!" replied Rozella, "I cannot tell. It never occurred to me to ask Smart how we could do that."

"And faith," said Ronsel O'Donnegan, "I'm thinking ye've got a dale more than ye bargained for. And it's the Ould Nick himself, since ye have raised the divil of him, that won't be going back to where the dacon sent the ould chief widout taking some bloody son of his mother along wid himsel."

"I'm off, then!" cried Pike.

"And I, too!" added the deacon.

And both made for the door; but the wolf headed them off by stationing himself against it and exhibiting two immense rows of long bristling fangs, the sight of which caused Pike to fall helpless to the floor; and the deacon followed him, with divers mutterings which sounded marvellously like what the Swan of Avon terms "swearing a prayer."

"Well," exclaimed Pete Hardy, "he seems to be laying us rather than we him. Now, suppose we go through the transforming operations and see what will turn up."

"Nothing else can be done," replied Rozella; "and, for one, I should like to see what form he will next assume."

"He'll come out a bear, I'm afraid," groaned Pike.

The wolf now advanced to the box and seated himself upon it, sitting up as straight as a young Indian. The barrel was now turned over him; and three or four of the largest men immediately jumped upon and held down the barrel, declaring that the wolf was now trapped and should never be released. Rozella alone objected, saying that it was impossible to entrap or confine spirits, and, besides, they might be injured in any such attempt.

All at once the rich notes of the golden robin were heard under the barrel, gushing full and free from a throat as golden as his name; and all present seemed entranced by the thrilling melody, while the men upon the barrel

leaped off and stood spellbound in silent amazement. The song then changed ; and they heard the sweet and plaintive strain of the whippoorwill, which anon was followed by the quaint phrase of the cuckoo ; and then came a scratch for the barrel to be removed. As they raised the barrel such a frightful screech of an owl rang through the room as to elicit from the ladies present an imitation of the cry nearly as thrilling and effective as the original itself ; while upon the box, instead of the wolf, sat Some Smart in all his smartness.

Rozella was the first to throw her arms around his neck ; and her laudable example was not lost upon the other ladies, whose rosy lips spoke in a tone far more eloquent than words their pleasure and delight. But Smart, to his infinite credit be it said, protested against this part of the proceedings as altogether irregular and not put down in the programme, besides not being in conformity to ghostly usage. Rozella retorted that he was no longer a wolf nor a spirit, but was referred by Smart to their conversation as they returned from their late expedition, who reminded her that, according to its tenor, the wolf was to go through three several transformations ; that he was now in the middle state, which he must soon leave for another, as it was impossible to continue long in one state or sphere.

"Then," replied Rozella, "if you change from your present state you are not the friend I supposed you to be."

"It matters not," answered he, "in what particular state I am ; for in each and all I am alike your friend and benefactor."

"But you are no spirit," persisted Rozella ; "you are plain Some Smart and nothing else, whether you are in a wolfskin or out of it. For a spirit hath not flesh and blood, nor so warm a cheek and lips as hath a certain Some Smart I wot of."

"If I was Smart when in the wolfskin," returned he, "where is that skin now? Have I eaten it?"

All looked for the wolfskin, but it was not to be seen; and they now began to regard the matter as indeed mysterious and unaccountable.

"Now," said Smart, as he looked around upon them, "I perceive that you begin to see me as I really am, and regard me in my true character of the wild spirit of the mountains. When I saw the party gathering to this house to avenge by the extermination of Chocorua and his crew the destruction of the Grovenor family, I could remain no longer in the form in which I then was, but took upon myself the human form in which you now see me that I might the better battle for the right. To test your courage and to ascertain what I could accomplish as a wolf, I took that form. And it was the same spirit now before you that enchanted your encampment; and it was this mouth, as you can easily believe after what you have heard to-night, that then poured forth the wild notes of the forest birds as well as the dismal cry of the owl. Knowing the nature and habits of the red man, I knew that he would destroy his captives before his final retreat unless he was driven away by force or by terror. I chose the latter; and how well I succeeded, mounted upon the horse of Chocorua, you know full well. The three scalps I brought in I took from the heads of the Indians already fallen by other hands. And when the wolves came howling about the lodge, I knew that nothing but a blazing firebrand would disperse them; so, while you were marching around the lodge, I passed into the form of a wolf, and, armed with the brand I had previously placed in the fire, climbed up behind the chimney and out through an opening upon the roof, and succeeded in putting them to flight beyond my most sanguine expectations. While you were rejoicing at my success I passed back by the same opening into the

lodge, and, resuming my present form, was again under my blanket when the brave Pike called my name. Still, I am a spirit, and with spirits do I principally associate. But I must now leave my present form and take another ; and to accomplish that change, you know the part you are to perform and I know mine. So now to the work."

He then seated himself again upon the box ; and the company, now more frightened than ever, placed the barrel again over him, and again marched around it, repeating the former magic words. As they completed the third round, a sweet voice, not unlike that of a female, but of a more wonderful power and volume than they ever heard before, sung the following lines, giving the closing words of each stanza save the last so soft that it seemed the echo of some responsive spirit : —

I.

Three times in circles round me move,
Like elves and fays round haunts they love ;
The charm and spell ye now will prove —
Tah atta Koosamau Owega.

II.

It matters not what sphere I take,
Where mountains frown or smiles the lake,
Or woods my mystic echoes wake —
Tah atta Koosamau Owega.

III.

Though warbling notes my fame enhance,
Or frightened foe fly from my lance,
Or in the magic circle's dance —
Tah atta Koosamau Owega.

IV.

All change is nought but in the brain ;
Enchanted wolf, or Smart, my name,
Or waltzing fairy, I'm the same —
Tah atta Koosamau Owega.

While the last verse was being sung they heard the signal scratch ; and, with trembling hands, pale faces, and white lips, and more excited than ever, they slowly raised the barrel. The closing words, which she sung just as the barrel was lifted, were given in a much louder and emphatic tone than in the preceding stanzas ; and the next moment Owega herself stood revealed to their astonished eyes — the same brighteyed Indian girl, with the identical leaf between her lips that was given her by Rozella at Norridgewock three years previous, and laughing as though she would burst into still another sphere with joy. While all were yet mute with roundeyed wonder she flew into Rozella's embrace, and, throwing her arms around her neck, laughingly exclaimed, —

"Now, Miss Rozella, Tah atta Koosamau Owega," — i. e., it is indeed Owega, — "and I shall pay back with interest the kisses you gave Some Smart."

Some of the company were still dubious as to her identity ; but when she turned over the box upon which she had stood, and revealed the wolfskin, and the well-known clothes of Some Smart, they were completely satisfied that she was the *bona fide* Owega, though they were as completely overwhelmed with admiration at the admirable skill with which she had carried out her deeply-designed plot.

CHAPTER XXX.

OWEGA TAKES THE APPELLATION OF QUEEN OF THE MOUNTAINS. — THE SUPPER. — SURPRISAL BY THE INDIANS.

AFTER the general rejoicings at the clearing up of this strange mystery had partially subsided, and the long and far-stretched minds of the company had settled down into composure, supper was announced; and although it was quite late, they took no note of time, not even from its loss. Owega was by general consent placed at the head of the table, by the side of Squire Langdell; and all vied with each other in showing her attention and doing her honor. It was now proposed that, as Rozella had borne the title of Queen of the Forest, the appellation of Owega should be Queen of the Mountains—which proposal was received and adopted by acclamation.

“Now,” said the squire, after supper was over, “I have been to Boston the past autumn, where I heard much and saw a little of the witchcraft for the practice of which they have hung so many people in Salem and Lynn; and I then and there openly boasted that nothing of that sort could ever deceive me. But in this case I confess I was staggered by what I saw, and was inclined to think it of supernatural origin, especially when I considered that it was no more improbable that there should be enchanted wolves and wild spirits among the solitudes of the mountains than that there should be bewitched women and

satanic manifestations in the thickly-settled towns. And the mysterious appearances and strange noises which I have heard to-night caused me more pain and were tenfold harder to endure than the torturing pangs of the rheumatism, which seemed tearing all my joints asunder. But the clearing up of this well-designed and skilfully-executed plot has now opened my eyes to the folly of resorting to supernatural agencies to account for any phenomena until those of the natural sphere are exhausted ; therefore from this time I believe no more in witchcraft or witches."

"I, too," said the farmer, "have learned a lesson ; for the Mountain Queen has put her hand to the plough, turned a handsome furrow, sowed the seed, and gathered the rich harvest, all without once looking back."

The others now followed ; and the sailor, the bushcutter, the Irishman, Grovenor, Pike, Hardy, and even the deacon, all acknowledged themselves outdone, overdone, and done brown, each after his own characteristic mode of expression.

But how soon may our brightest prospects be transformed to "darkness and clouds of awful shade"! How often, when we reach for the substance, do we grasp but the shadow ! or attempt to pluck the rose, when the winds of chance sway the bush from our grasp, and the thorn which leaves a sting behind is our only portion ! It was even so upon the night of the social gathering we have attempted to describe. They had met to rejoice, and were still rejoicing, over the destruction of their lately-dreaded foe, the last chief of the Pequawketts ; but in the midst of their hilarity thick gloom came down on them like night, and a yet more terrible storm soon burst upon their heads. Just as their mirth and merriment were at their height, Rozella, hearing a slight noise at the opposite side of the room, looked in that direction, and, to her utter horror, the first object that met her eye, as it fell upon the

window, was the foxskin cap of Jack Taurus ; while directly beneath it, and peering through the lower pane, were the frightfully painted faces of three Indians. She had barely sufficient strength to point to the window, and then fell to the floor faint and powerless. The company present, not dreaming of the slightest danger now that Chocorua was slain, and unheeding his dying declaration that Taurus had gone to Canada to bring the Nepissins and Abenakis down upon them, were wholly unarmed and unprepared for resistance.

The old chief had spoken but the truth ; and as Taurus and his band had neared the settlement, they were met by the little remnant of the Pequawketts, who related the sad story of the death of their chief and the total overthrow and dispersion of all his followers, not omitting a highly-colored account of the important part taken in the scene by the enchanted wolf or the wild spirit of the mountains. But when, early in the evening, they arrived at the house of Squire Langdell, and, posting themselves silently around it, witnessed all the proceedings and heard all the conversation relating to the mystery of the enchanted wolf, and became aware of the fact that this dreaded monster was no more to be feared than any other mortal, they regained their courage, and with terrific yells and whoops rushed in upon their defenceless victims.

A few of our friends succeeded in making their escape ; but others were taken captives and hurried off in great haste.

In good time we shall follow their fates and fortunes ; but for the present we must turn our attention towards our old friend Captain Waldron and his brave band of Mountain Rangers, whom we left on the point of starting on their expedition to do battle in the cause of the king and crown upon the far-off Isle of Cape Breton.

CHAPTER XXXI.

RETURN OF THE MOUNTAIN RANGERS FROM CAPE BRETON. — THEIR SUCCESS THERE. — THEIR WARM RECEPTION AT THE HOUSE OF SQUIRE LANGDELL. — WALDRON'S SICKNESS.

AFTER the gallant Mountain Rangers left the house of Squire Langdell, on the evening of the presentation of the banner by the fair Rozella, they marched rapidly forward to the shrill music of the fife, and the quick rat tat tat of the drum, which played in concert with the dancing beams of the harvest moon and cheered their unflagging footsteps on their winding way.

Captain Waldron, as he looked back to see that his new company, of which he seemed quite proud, kept in proper military order, was observed by some of his band to suffer his gaze to rest for a long time upon the dwelling of Squire Langdell, where the sylphlike form of her in whom were centred his fondest hopes and aspirations was still to be seen, as she gazed with fond though weeping eyes after the receding band.

As he reached the last hill from which her home, en-
cleared by a thousand and one ties, though that *one* was
stronger than a thousand others, was visible, he gave one
parting look at the spot, and then, dashing the rising tear
from his eye, wheeled to the right about and gave the
order for a promiscuous and irregular march. The sections
broke up, and the soldiers, having a long march before

them, hurried forward at their utmost speed. Cheerful conversation then commenced, the eloquent speech of the Forest Queen being first extolled; and then came the subject of the glory and honor each one hoped to reap ere his return to the land he was proud to call his own—the loved and lovely Laconia.

Still onward they swept, and toiled, and fought; but as the narrator's task is mostly confined within the borders of Laconia we must hail them on their return, and report their movements subsequently to the battles of Cape Breton.

The Mountain Rangers, then, are on their return to their long-loved and dearly-cherished Laconia. Captain Waldron, who will subsequently relate their most heroic skirmishes and stormings at Louisburg, is at their head, with his honors of victory thick upon him. Grizzly Gridley and Wiley Walcott, the former lieutenant and the latter ensign of the Mountain Rangers, have both gleaned a bountiful harvest of renown and heroic glory.

Ensign Wiley Walcott had, ever since their departure from Laconia, avowed a decided passion for Miss Elsie Tuf-ton, and determined, if he ever returned, to proffer her his hand, as she had already captivated his heart.

He had held many confidential sessions with Captain Waldron upon the subject so near and dear to his breast; and the captain had volunteered his services to the ensign and pledged him what influence he might possess in that quarter.

There was nothing very remarkable in the ensign's personal appearance except his eyes, which, as he approached the observer, seemed of a bright silver gray. But, as he came nearer, the gray part proved to be separated into as many rings, or belts, though not quite so large to be sure, as surround the planet Saturn. Each belt was dissimilar both in width and color. The pupil was dark blue,

the first rim of the iris of a very light blue, the next white, and the last gray. He had the power, also, of giving his eyelids a sort of comical twist, which, at every repetition, would set the whole company into a roar of laughter.

Lieutenant Grizzly Gridley was the soldier who was his constant companion, as he had formerly been his fast friend and associate.

Gridley was a man of large and muscular proportions, of not very genteel gait, and was, moreover, somewhat round shouldered, while his long arms reached nearly to his knees ; and, although he was a young man, his hair and beard were full of white spots, which gave it a grizzly appearance.

Grizzly and Walcott both were from Maine. They came to Laconia together, and had taken adjacent lots of lands and built a log house upon the line which they occupied in common.

Ever after Gridley came to Laconia he had harbored queer notions upon transmigration or preëxistence, which troubled him exceedingly ; for there were certain localities he thought he must at some time antecedent to that have seen, though it might have been through some other eyes than those he now wore. But how he imbibed those singular ideas may yet appear.

After the capture of Louisburg the gallant Mountain Rangers had remained in the city, together with a part of the other New England regiments, to hold the place in subjection. But as soon as a force sufficient to hold Louisburg under military rule had arrived, the Mountain Rangers, who had now been absent from their homes for a long time, obtained a furlough to visit their homes, with the understanding that, if they were again wanted at Cape Breton or at Quebec, they should march with the New York troops by the way of Crown Point and Montreal. And most joyfully swelled the bosoms of the brave band

generally, and of Captain Waldron in particular, who smiled in his dreams both of the night and of the day at the inspiring thought of soon clasping the sweet young Forest Queen in his arms — the prize above all others for which he had suffered, fought, and bled. And Ensign Walcott, too, whom it was agreed on all hands had earned an enviable reputation among the heroes of Laconia, and whose claim and title to the hand of the fair Elsie no one would dispute, was in the highest state of exhilaration and delight.

But while the soldiers are passing on board the good ship Northern Light we will relate the sad fate of one of the principal movers in the Cape Breton expedition, and success of the worthy chaplain.

In a dark, obscure street, in the metropolis of London, lies a wronged and disappointed man, dying in poverty and neglect. It is poor Vaughan, the originator and master spirit of the late enterprise. As he originated the expedition, he came here in the vain expectation of receiving some little honor or title from the royal sovereign for whom he had so successfully fought. Warren and Pepperell, who had really done nothing but to follow and carry out the plans of Vaughan, had each received the title of baronet ; and Pepperell received the commission of colonel in the British army ; while Warren was promoted to the rank of admiral. Vaughan had urged his claims to similar distinctions, but had been put off from time to time for a year, until his exhausted frame had given way and King Death was about to claim his allegiance to him as his lawful sovereign. "Bubble, bubble ; alas ! all things earthly are but bubbles," sighed he, as his failing breath issued in frothy bubbles from his mouth. "Well, 'tis nearly over ; and to what does it all amount ? Ah," continued he, as he shifted his hot and fevered head upon his lonely pillow, "for what came I here ? For a title ; for the

empty honor of having conferred upon me the sounding name of baronet—a term to which bubble is a fit synonyme. And yet, so anxious was I to receive it that my health and strength sank under the excitement and left me before my ambition. The king has wronged me in bestowing the distinctions to which I was justly entitled upon Warren and Pepperell, who merely looked on while I planned and executed the work. Besides, Waldron, Walcott, and Gridley were a thousand times more worthy of the honor of knighthood than either of them. But so wags the world; and so, I fear me, will it ever continue. Yes, life is but a bubble; and yet I cannot but regret, now that mine is about to burst and vanish in thin air, that I have broken many a one as dear as my own. Well, it must needs have been so; but, had I not been a soldier, I might have been a better Christian. I have but reaped as I have sown. But is there not mercy yet reserved for a dying man with Him who is the depth of mercy? And yet, how can he who has shown no mercy to others expect mercy for himself? And, though I am no coward, the shrieks and groans of the wounded and dying are still ringing in my ears, and will not be silenced. O, mercy, mercy; the last bubble is about to break; but Heaven is not a bubble, and I pray that it may be merciful to my poor soul.”

As the last words fell faint and brokenly from his pale lips poor Vaughan clasped his hands together upon his breast, closed his eyes, and the next moment the bubble of life had indeed burst, and the spirit of the unfortunate man passed into the presence of his merciful Father. There let us with confidence leave him; for, although his profession as a warrior did not permit him the exercise of many Christian virtues, he was, according to the standard of the age in which he lived, a brave, true, and good man; an honor to his king, who disregarded his merits; to the ministry, who suppressed his real claims; and to

his country, the loved Laconia, in whose service he had so long and so valiantly fought.

While the officers and soldiers were keeping the city of Louisburg in subjection by the force of arms, their worthy chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Moody, was keeping a portion of the French soldiers to whom he had gained access in subjection by the force of moral suasion. In a little Roman Catholic church, from which the idolatrous images and pictures had been removed, he labored diligently to bring his auditors to a true and understanding knowledge of the truth and power of spiritual worship, and its infinite superiority over that of images, or pictures, or any mere device of man's hands. He taught them that salvation is from God alone, through his Son, and not from the priest, and that the life and heart must be purified until the fine silver in the crucible of the heart is melted as by the refiner's fire and reflected in the life the true image of the great Purifier. He instructed them, furthermore, that the heart, and not the pulpit of the priest, is the altar where the picture of the Savior should be erected and from which his image should be reflected. But although a few were convinced, or at least silenced, by the force of his arguments and the soundness of his logic, he found the words of Rozella at the presentation of the banner to be too true ; viz., that the minds and hearts of the people of the island were darker and more impenetrable than the dense fogs that enveloped it. He had endeavored to convince them that telling their beads for prayer was a mockery unless the heart of the worshipper is fixed on God alone ; and, if the latter was the case, the counting of the beads was wholly needless ; that no arm of flesh could save the sinner, nor could any man pardon or absolve the sins of the heart ; that works of supererogation were impossible, inasmuch as when we had done all in our power we had not exceeded our duty, and that all forms were

needless if the heart was regenerated and right ; that true and acceptable worship of the great Ruler of heaven and earth consisted in carrying out his designs and purposes, in alleviating the woes and assisting the distresses of others, and in visiting the widow and orphan in their affliction, and keeping themselves unspotted from the world. These and many other similar views did he urge upon them ; but, finding the influence and power of the priest so much stronger than his own, he relinquished the field and subsequently left Louisburg with the Mountain Rangers, to whose cause and interest he seemed entirely devoted.

The morning after the granting of the furlough, at early dawn, the company, with every soldier in his best dress and brightest look, paraded upon the broad square of Louisburg, and marched down to the wharf, and went on board their gallant ship, the Northern Light, whose deck seemed to expand exultingly at their approach. They now weighed anchor, and spread their broad sails to the wind, and stood out for the open sea.

France, upon the receipt of the news of the capture of Louisburg, was thrown into the wildest excitement and consternation. She instantly formed a plan for the recovery of that city and the complete destruction of the English colonies ; and it was by reason of this scheme, as we shall soon see, that those on board the Northern Light and two or three other vessels of war, on board of which were other New England troops, when they arrived at the Straits of Canso, where they had been delayed by the ice in their outward passage, now met a much more formidable obstacle. This was a large French fleet and army, which had just reached Canso, under command of that renowned warrior, the Duke d'Anville. As the New England ships came down the straits, so dark and dense was the fog that the French did not discern the English

nor the English the French until they had run so nearly together that neither could have turned to escape had they wished so to do.

"Avast there!" shouted the Duke d'Anville, and "Avast there!" sung out Captain Waldron, at one and the same time.

When the fog cleared away, there lay the French fleet strung along the shore in the proportion of ten French ships to one of the English.

"Heave to!" sternly commanded the duke.

"Never, until we are forced to do so!" returned the undaunted Waldron.

"We will heave you a cannon ball," added Walcott, "if that will answer your purpose."

"If it will not," cried Gridley, "then we will come ourselves and present you our swords' points first, which will be a striking and piercing proof of our disposition to gain your friendship."

Gridley had hardly closed his remark when a cannon boomed from the duke's vessel, and the next moment the flying splinters which flew from the mainmast of the Northern Light showed that the Mounseers were ready for the fight. A brisk fire was now returned by the English, who fired twice while the French fired once, and did little execution at that. Still they kept up a feeble fire, while the English blazed away furiously and fast. The Duke d'Anville soon sent a flag of truce on deck, and the firing ceased.

"They are cowards," said Waldron; and so said they all.

The duke now came on deck, and, bowing to Waldron, said, —

"We must let you pass; for we are too far reduced by a terrible pestilence which has broken out among our men to contend further."

"Ah," replied Waldron, "but we will not let you pass until you strike your colors and yield yourselves prisoners of war. Lower the boats," continued he to his crew, "and board and seize the nearest vessel."

The order had hardly escaped his lips when the boats struck the water, and Walcott, Gridley, and a dozen other resolute men jumped into them and boarded the nearest vessel ; but the stench from the hold was so dreadful and overpowering that it was with difficulty they could avoid fainting. As they approached the hatchway, a part of the crew were engaged in raising from below a large hogshead containing the bodies of the dead, and, carrying it to the vessel's side, emptied its ghastly contents into the sea. The soldiers hastened back to their ship and reported the terrible spectacle they had witnessed ; and the hostile fleets then separated without further demonstrations of hostility, each glad to escape from the other. This pestilence is mentioned by the historians of that day as being the most fatal scourge on record, which swept off so many men from so small an army. Besides the unknown hundreds thrown overboard at sea, eleven hundred were carried on shore at Halifax and there buried. Disasters of storms and shipwrecks followed close upon the footsteps of pestilence ; the officers became divided in their councils ; and finally, so dejected were their spirits and so faint their hopes, their commander-in-chief, the Duke d'Anville, finished at once, by poison, his sorrows and his life. This was an additional weight added to the burden of the already well nigh crushed officer who was second in command ; and in a fit of delirium he threw himself upon his own sword, and thus terminated his existence. By this melancholy succession of diseases and disasters their hopes and prospects were blighted and destroyed ; and the few remaining soldiers of the late powerful French fleet who survived, or rather lingered than lived, returned broken hearted to their homes.

The New Hampshire forces now put their vessels again before the wind, and soon were bounding over the waves towards their wished-for haven.

"Now," said Waldron, "my mind is tranquil and composed. We shall encounter no more foes upon these waters; and our old enemies, the Indians, were destroyed or driven from the borders of Laconia before we left. Would that we were there to-night; but with this favoring gale we shall soon, I doubt not, be with those we love, in whose dear companionship we shall find unalloyed happiness." So saying, he started up and paced the deck impatiently, exclaiming, "I can hardly contain myself at our slow progress."

"And I," said Wiley Walcott, "am as impatient as yourself; and if I only had wings I would never fold them until I alighted at the house of Robert Tufton and grasped the hand of the fair Elsie."

"Ah," cried Waldron, "she is, indeed, a fair maiden and a worthy. She is a great favorite with all who know her; but ——"

"But what?" interrupted Walcott. "Though I suppose you intended to add that she is not quite equal to Rozella."

"Well," said Waldron, "in my opinion both are nearly faultless; though, of course, they are not precisely alike; and the fair Elsie does not quite fill Rozella's shoes in my eye, you know."

"Very well," replied Walcott, "you have a right to your opinion, and I to mine; but her shoes are doubtless large enough for her little feet, and I presume answer every purpose. But be that as it may, if I can only be so fortunate as to obtain her, shoes or no shoes, I shall be perfectly satisfied."

"That's the right kind of talk," cried Grizzly Gridley, coming forward; "but I hope these brave officers will

not get into a quarrel about their respective favorites. If they should, I shall interfere and bear off the highest prize myself."

"No danger of our quarrelling," answered Waldron, laughing, "for we are both satisfied already; besides, we have quarrelled enough for them and for the land they dwell in without quarrelling about them."

"But supposing," said Gridley, "while we have been absent, that brace of ruffians, Taurus and Janus, or some equally worthy gentlemen, have stolen a march upon you and taken the castle, queens and all."

"O, horror!" said Waldron, shuddering and wiping the beaded perspiration from his pale brow. "What put that into your head, lieutenant?"

"I cannot tell, sir," replied Gridley; "but why are you so agitated?"

"A dreadful dream that I had the night before Vaughan sailed for England," returned Waldron, "which your remark brought fresh to my mind."

"If that is all," replied the lieutenant, bowing low in acknowledgment of the compliment paid him by his superior officer, "you may compose yourself at once; for I assure you there is nothing in dreams; for I have had thousands of them, and never knew any evil come of them yet."

"Well," returned Waldron, "we will drop these melancholy forebodings; but still it seems to me that our vessel makes but slow headway."

"It must be the effect of your imagination, then," replied Gridley; "for we are now going nearly ten knots an hour, and the wind is still fresh and strong."

"If the captain and myself," said Walcott, "do any more fighting for the sweet flowers of our selection, we shall do it bravely, I warrant you."

"You are not sure of the fair Elsie yet," retorted Grid-

ley ; "for it may be that, when you have fought bravely to obtain her, she will fight as bravely to escape you."

Walcott made no answer, but turned quickly about and gazed with moistened eyes over the broad expanse of the ocean ; and Captain Waldron, knowing well the feelings that were tugging at his heart, said cheerily, "Never mind, my brave friend ; here you will command what little influence I may possess over her ; and, besides, Elsie Tufton is a girl of too good sense to refuse a man of Ensign Walcott's standing, with the addition of the rank and distinction his deeds of heroism have won him in this expedition. Especially should his suit prosper at a time when, above all others, Laconia is most in need of additional inhabitants ; for, among the fairer and better portion of our community particularly, the injunction given to our first parents to multiply and replenish the earth is regarded as having binding force ; and, should it become generally known that Elsie had refused so eligible an offer, she would meet with but little sympathy or assistance from the good mothers of Laconia in any matrimonial schemes she might afterwards devise."

When, a few days succeeding this conversation, they neared the Harbor of Portsmouth, and both officers and men burned with impatience for the moment when they should leave the unstable water and again feel the solid earth beneath their feet, as the officers were pacing the deck, straining their anxious eyes to the distant horizon to discover the first indication of land, Walcott approached the chaplain, and, with his old comical twist at the corners of his belted eyes, asked his reverence why he had never taken a partner for life, reminding him of his duty on that point, and adding, that, in case a wife and children were awaiting his coming, he would hardly be able to appear as calm and composed as he now seemed.

"True," replied the chaplain ; "and I may marry at

some future time, perhaps, should Fortune smile upon me. But for the present I live for others, and not for myself; and while I have not the anxiety to reach home which others manifest, that I may have the pleasure of meeting and greeting the dear ones there, neither am I distressed with fearful forebodings that in my absence it has fared ill with them. Besides," continued he, with a slight twinkle of the eye, as if in imitation of his interrogator, "if I had no other assurance of a welcome reception from some fair one than that arising from a high opinion of my own importance, I might chance to get such a rebuff as to make me wish myself back again to fight the fogs and French of Cape Breton."

Walcott, although he took the clerical joke, staggered under it, and, amid the laughter of the little crowd who had gathered round, sat down, apparently quite fatigued. Captain Waldron, who had heard the conversation, now came to the aid of his friend Walcott, and observed, —

"He has my influence, such as it is, in his favor, and I have promised to do all in my power to advance his suit."

"Very kind in you," replied the chaplain; "and the worthy ensign should have mine if I possessed any; but, as it is, I can only give him my best wishes that he may be successful in his laudable undertaking. Still, captain, it is not impossible that you will have enough to do in cultivating your own rosebush without finding time to weed or work in your neighbor's garden."

It was now the captain's turn to look blank and disconcerted; and, giving his shoulders an extra shrug, he took the arm of Walcott and commenced promenading the deck.

"How slowly," said Captain Waldron, "does the Northern Light move along!" as they neared the Harbor of Portsmouth.

"So it seems to me," replied Walcott; "and yet they say she makes good headway."

"By the way, ensign," said Waldron, "what do you understand by the general feeling among us that something has been going wrong at home during our absence?"

"I do not know," replied Walcott; "but it seems as if all of us had a presentiment of the same thing. Still I am in hopes that, in spite of all these forebodings, every thing will be clear and bright when we reach old Laconia."

"I hope so, truly," cried the captain. "At any rate, I intend to know how matters really stand before I sleep if we meet with no accident in landing."

"I am glad to hear," responded Walcott, "that you intend to go directly home; and I will accompany you thither. I suppose you will visit Squire Langdell's first?"

"I could go nowhere else if I would," answered Waldron; "and you shall accompany me thither; and, as Rozella and Elsie are such warm friends, it may be that the latter will be at the squire's. If not, you will be made welcome there; and I do not doubt but that the lovely Rozella will accompany me as your escort to her father's on the morrow."

"Nothing would suit me better," returned Walcott; "and, if you would not think me presuming, I would suggest that you now parade the company and dismiss them, that we may have no further duties to perform after landing, but be able to proceed directly up the Cocheco."

"Certainly not," replied the captain; "and I was just thinking of the same thing. It will be quite a saving of time; and, besides, the chaplain may wish to make some remarks before we finally separate."

"And I will get out the banner," said Walcott, "that we have been so fortunate in preserving; and I intend it shall never go out of my hand until I put it in your own,

that it may be returned to Rozella, as you promised it should be, untarnished and undisgraced."

The ensign started to the cabin for the banner, and the captain gave orders that the company should be paraded on deck for a formal dismissal. The roll of the drum was now heard, and the next moment the soldiers rushed on deck. They were marshalled in proper order, and the glorious banner was unfurled to the breeze. As its silken folds rolled out upon the air a spontaneous cheer burst from the lips of the entire company and pealed far over the silent deep. The captain was pale from excitement, and his voice trembled as he gave the necessary orders; but, turning to the company, he addressed them as follows:—

"Gentlemen, officers, and fellow-soldiers: the gratitude of my heart, that, by permission of a kind Providence, we have been permitted to return, is too deep for me adequately to express; and while we have to mourn the loss of some of our bravest men and best officers, who have fallen in the glorious cause of our common country, still it gives me pleasure to say that no braver men have fallen than are those who yet survive. For the prompt observance of the military rules and orders, so necessarily strict, you are to be as much commended as for your bravery. The positions in which we have been placed in our engagements have been much against us and in favor of the enemy; yet, from the time we left this beautiful Harbor of Portsmouth, into which we are about to enter, you have borne yourselves like soldiers and fought like heroes. The ship from Martinico which you took as a prize, the transport you retook after it had escaped, and the demolishing of the village of St. Peter's are swift witnesses of your deeds of valor.

"For firing the warehouses containing the naval stores,

when thirteen English resolutely confronted a hundred French ; in the tedious labor, for fourteen successive nights, in making sledges and drawing the cannon over the deep morass ; in the charge upon the battery by night, in which the brave Armstrong with sixty others fell ; in the bombardment of the city from the harbor, and the battery erected on Lighthouse Cliff ; in the blowing up of the great royal magazine and consequent panic of the French, and particularly in the appearance of Ensign Wiley Walcott upon his noble steed " (here Wiley Walcott forgot his griefs and his Elsie for the moment, and gave the "twist comical," to the obstreperous merriment of the whole company ; and Waldron so far forgot Rozella as to laugh for a moment, but, quickly recovering himself, continued) "upon the walls of the city, with yon glorious banner waving so triumphantly above him in that dread scene of death when the mine was sprung under our feet,—in each and all of these was your stern and heroic valor proved and established ; and for each and every triumph receive, gentlemen, my hearty thanks and unqualified commendation. And now, after the customary services by our worthy chaplain, you are dismissed, to return to your homes and friends in such manner as may best suit your convenience. Hoping that you may find them all safe and in good health, I now bid you an affectionate farewell."

The chaplain then performed his official duties ; and, as the good ship Northern Light rode into the harbor and came to anchor, the eager soldiers crowded the boats which conveyed them to the shore to their utmost capacity, and, springing up the beach, hastened up the delightful banks of the Cocheco by the way of the Upper Plantation, now Dover.

After the landing of the troops Ensign Walcott furled his banner, and, in company with many other Mountain

Rangers, marched rapidly to their homes. Waldron and Walcott secured a ride with a man from the Upper Plantation, of whom they anxiously inquired concerning the state of their beloved Laconia.

"All right now, I believe," replied the man of the whip. "I have been in this section but a short time, and have heard that there have been troubles and massacres in some of the townships; but all is quiet in our settlement."

"I am rejoiced to hear it!" exclaimed Waldron, as he heaved a deep sigh of relief.

"Good news at last," added Walcott.

"Do you know one Squire Langdell," asked Waldron of the teamster, "who lives up the Cocheco valley in the direction of Merry Meeting Bay?"

"I have never heard of him," replied the teamster.

"He is a new comer," observed Waldron to Walcott; "but this convinces me they are all well there; for, had any thing of importance transpired, this man must surely have been apprised of it."

"Certainly," answered Walcott. "My nerves are a pretty good barometer to notify me when a storm is at hand; and I tell you, captain, it is clear sky over old Laconia yet."

By this time the honest yeoman had reached his home; so the two soldiers, who were now far in advance of all their comrades, sped on their way with lighter hearts than ever. They travelled on through the woods, remarking upon the new houses which had been built in the cleared patches since they left the settlement. But they at length came to the foot of the hill from whose summit Waldron had taken his last look of the lovely Rozella, and dashed away the tear which moistened his eye at the thought that he might be leaving her forever. His heart beat so violently that it seemed as if about to burst from his bosom; and he sat down with his companion to rest. More rest-

less than rested, they soon sprang up and ran rather than walked up the hill; and there stood the old house, seen darkly and dimly through the night air; but to Waldron it never looked so large or so pleasant before.

"There is the grand old house!" cried Waldron, pressing his hands over his heart. "How my heart leaps to again behold it! for there dwells the one so unutterably dear to me and for whom I have gladly toiled and suffered."

As they passed on a moving light was seen shining over the upper half of the window, the shutter of the lower half being closed.

"It's she!" exclaimed Waldron, rapturously; "indeed, it can be no other than my own White Pigeon."

They now walked to the door, before which still lay the remains of the platform upon which Rozella stood on the night of their departure. On raising their eyes to the window, the light from an open space between the shutter and the casing enabled them to get a limited view of the apartment; and to their unbounded joy they caught a glimpse of her who was within, clad in the well-known russet dress and blue spencer so familiar to their eager gaze. Waldron caught Walcott by the arm with a convulsive grasp and exclaimed, —

"Do you see that dress? Is it not the same?"

"The same, sure enough," replied he.

"And look again," cried Waldron, as a second form moved between them and the light; "by the glimpse of her dress, the other can be none other than Elsie Tufton."

It was now Walcott's turn to grasp the arm of his companion as he exclaimed, —

"Can it be possible? O that it may be so!"

"'Tis she, I can assure you," replied Waldron; "for she has on the same dress that she wore at the presentation of the banner."

"Well, captain," responded the now overjoyed Walcott,

"I am perfectly happy. Two happier soldiers, captain, never returned to their truehearted than you and I. I wish they would come forward again, so that we might see their lovely faces."

"I can't endure this longer," said Waldron; "let us go in. Now put all your courage on, for I am about to rap."

"Rap, then," returned Walcott, "and let us get through the preliminaries as soon as possible; for, although I am not exactly afraid, yet my heart throbs as though it would burst my side. I was never fainthearted before, even when the fiery mouths of a hundred cannon were belching forth death and destruction in our very faces."

They now mounted the steps and rapped loudly at the door; and in a moment the window above them was raised, and a female voice exclaimed, "The brave hero has come!"

"'Tis Rozella's voice," said Waldron; "I should know its dulcet tones among a thousand others." As he spoke he again raised his eyes to feast them upon the dear face which had so long haunted his sleeping and his waking dreams; but, as he did so, the wind through the raised window extinguished the light, so that he failed to accomplish his purpose. The next moment the outer door was opened, and as Captain Waldron entered a voice exclaimed, "O, my brave hero has come at last!" and he was clasped in the embrace of the fair speaker.

"O my love! my idol!" cried Waldron, straining her to his breast. "Please excuse me for disturbing you at this late hour; but I was over-anxious to again look upon that sweet face, and to see that blushing cheek whose glowing hue shames and outvies the summer rose." While this was transpiring Ensign Walcott flew in by the captain and rushed into the arms of his idol, uttering similar phrases of endearment, and crying out, "I have come,

dearest Elsie, to throw myself at your feet ; and O, do not, I beseech you, turn a deaf ear to my suit."

"How can I refuse one so brave and so devoted?" was the reply. "All I am, or ever can be, is a thousand times yours."

"Not a night," continued Waldron, "has passed, since I left my own dear one, but I have dreamed of you, and you only ; nor has a single waking thought been given to any one save your lovely self. And now that we are united at last, never, never will we part."

"Never, no, never," replied the fair embraced idol ; "you must never leave these fond encircling arms."

A short pause from sheer exhaustion in the excitement of what the gallant ensign had not unaptly termed "the preliminaries" now ensued ; and in a few moments another lady, who had been aroused by the tumultuous greetings, came with a light into the entry, where the happy, yea, thrice happy pairs were still standing in loving embrace. She advanced closer, and, letting the light shine full upon them, lo and behold, there was the brave Captain Waldron worshipping at the feet of old Dolly Plot ; while the gallant Ensign Walcott was in the fond embrace of another creature equally objectionable !

"Blood and horrors !" shouted the captain, as he sprang back as from the coil of some loathsome serpent.

"Honey and heroes !" retorted old Dolly.

"For what purpose are you here, you witch ?" cried Waldron, as he glared angrily on her.

"Call me not witch in my own house," retorted Dolly.

"Your own house ? Ha !" cried Waldron.

"Yes," returned she, "my house ; and I would give you to understand that I am mistress of it too ; and if you give me any more of your insults I will show you that I have power enough, witch or no witch, to lay you upon the floor."

The captain drew his sword and turned round to the ensign ; but as his eye fell upon the other "strange woman," he burst out, "Horror! What! another of the infernal crew?" and returned his sword to its sheath.

"You will suffer for the liberties you have taken to-night," said Dolly. "My hand aches now, and I really believe you have broken it."

"But where is Rozella," inquired Waldron, "whose dress you now disgrace?"

"She is where they don't need to dress in such style as such fine ladies as we are must do," replied Dolly.

"And where is Elsie Tufton?" demanded the ensign, as he gave one glance of intense disgust at her who had on the habiliments of his dear Elsie, "in whose clothes you are now incased?"

"Be careful how you throw out your insinuations," replied Mag Naylor ; for such was the name of her whom he addressed.

"O, what fiends have we fallen among," said Waldron, "where we most expected to find friends! And although I am not given to profanity, and do not wish to lower myself by dealing out unnecessary anathemas upon your unworthy heads, still I must say that you are demons in the garbs of angels. Now, Dolly Plot, I demand of you to tell me, if you know, where that angel is whose robes you have on."

"The angel is in them still," was Dolly's sneering reply.

"I have heard," resumed the captain, "that, when a serpent cast off its skin, another filthy reptile sometimes took possession of the old slough ; but never before did I hear of an old snake crawling into and wearing the dress of an angel."

Dolly's dignity was touched by this side wind, and she bounced about the room in a perfect tempest of wrath.

She then ran into the other room, caught up the shovel and commenced pounding on the floor.

"It's of no use," said Waldron; "your tricks are too well known to produce any effect on us soldiers. Now, since you will not tell us where Rozella is, will you inform us of the whereabouts of the owner of this house?"

"Here she is," answered Dolly; "I am the owner of this house."

"Where is Squire Langdell?" asked Waldron, becoming impatient at her evasions. "Is he at home?"

"I heard," replied Dolly, with a malicious grin, "that he had gone to his long home; and I hope it is true. And you, Britton Waldron, had better make yourself scarce, or you may go to a worse place, for insulting a lady like me; for when Mr. Janus comes home, which will be before many hours, he will make you suffer, whether you are his majesty's soldiers or his majesty's scavengers."

"Is it the notorious Dick Janus to whom you refer?" asked Waldron.

"The same," answered Dolly; "and a fine man he is too."

"He's a thief and a coward," replied Waldron; "and I should like nothing better than to meet him."

"He will be here soon," said Dolly; "I thought it was he when you intruded your impudent face into the door; but, finding out my mistake, I thought I would remain quiet and give you a chance to discover yours."

"And where is his companion, Jack Taurus?" asked Waldron.

"Aha!" cried Dolly, "I thought you would come to it at last. If you must know, then, I will tell you. Mr. Taurus and Miss Rozella Langdell left the pleasant land of Laconia in the nighttime. Their affection was so strong that neither could leave without the other; so they went off together."

"Horror of horrors!" cried the captain. "To what place did they fly? I will follow them this very night; and, if I can but reach her side and lay me down and die, I shall be content."

"Whew!" whistled Dolly, rising on tiptoe with exultation, as she saw she had now touched him upon the raw. "To tell you the truth, captain, Rozella Langdell never loved but one, which one you supposed to be yourself; but as soon as you were gone fog hunting she was seen in company with Taurus in the woods between here and the North Road, and they were known to turn off from the road, and were seen by an Indian hunter going towards a certain cave in the mountains, and to the very spot where Taurus assured her that he should locate his house."

"Impossible!" sobbed Waldron, now entirely unmanned, as he staggered against the door.

"It is true, every word of it," added Mag Naylor; "and you had not been gone more than a fortnight before Taurus was seen at this house, and in this very room; and Rozella hastened to get him something to eat—called him poor man, and said she knew he must be tired and hungry; and even went so far as to get out her tea set for him. And besides this, Mrs. Langdell got him the easy chair and insisted that he should sit in it; and such a fuss and parade did they make over him that even little Owega thought she must do something as well as the rest, and so brought him some water."

"O horror! horror!" shrieked the captain. "I can hear no more."

"That's what I thought," chuckled Dolly Plot; "and from that night when she absconded with him her poor parents' hearts sunk under the awful blow; and I suppose they both have died of broken hearts long before this."

The words had hardly passed her lips when with a hollow groan Waldron fell upon the floor faint and senseless. Walcott flew to his assistance; while Dolly and Mag, catching each other around the waist, whirled and waltzed in regular witch style, and sung the "Devil's Dream."

"Ha! ha!" exclaimed a gruff voice at the door. "What does all this mean? A high time you are having in my absence."

"O Janus," cried both the women, "how glad we are that you have come!"

"Yes, dearest Janus," pursued Dolly; "these mean intruders here have been insulting us ladies in the most outrageous manner; but I soon laid the captain, as all foul spirits should be laid, with the magic wand of my tongue."

Janus now stepped in, followed by another ill-favored man like himself; and Dolly, winding up the striking weight of her tongue, rattled off to them the whole proceedings of the night with such rapidity that compared to it the quick chime of an alarm clock would seem but the infrequent strokes of a fog bell. By the time Dolly's tongue had run down, Captain Waldron, by the aid of some cold water with which the ensign had bathed his burning temples, had partially recovered. Janus now came forward, still clad in his striped frock and funnel hat; but he had been so intemperate of late that his fallen red eyelid and scarred cheek looked more fiery than ever.

"I demand, Captain Waldron," said he, in a loud, blustering tone, "that you leave my house immediately, and never enter it again."

"Your house?" returned the captain. "How many owners are there for these premises? That witch there just said it was hers."

"So it is," replied Janus; "and mine too."

"Married, eh?" observed the captain.

"Yes; and it's our house," snarled Dolly; "we are its masters, and the good people of Laconia cannot get rid of us so easily. They attempted to banish my dear Janus from the country, and sentenced him to be shot as an outlaw if he returned, and sentenced me to be sent to an island in the Winnipiseogee. But Janus escaped from the men who were taking him to Portsmouth, and I never quitted this section of the country. So here we are; and how are you going to help yourself?"

The soldiers both drew their swords; and the ensign gathered up the banner, which had fallen on the floor.

"Stand back," shouted the captain, "ye thieves and outlaws!" and, suiting the action to the word, caused his good sword to cut the air before him. The enemy now put themselves in battle array—the women being in front, and their bold defenders in the rear. Dolly had put on her high cap; and now, as she stood directly in front of her giant companion, his eye glared just over its peak. Tab had dashed in from the outside, and stood spitting and sputtering upon the table, with his back curved and arched and his hair standing up like the bristles of a brush; and Mag Naylor stood in front of Janus, with the backs of her uplifted hands resting upon her shoulders, and her long, skinny fingers spread out and bent ready for action.

"Leave this house," commanded the captain, "every one of ye!" at the same time, with an adroit cut of his sword, causing the upper story of Dolly's cap to fall to the floor and the blood to gush from the giant's split nose at one and the same blow. The brave Janus retreated to a back room; while Mag Naylor's nails had only reached the ensign's sword, the edge of which proved too sharp for her delicate fingers. The giant had now become aroused, and both parties were preparing for a sudden onslaught, when the

door flew open, and Grizzly Gridley, with a dozen brave soldiers whom the captain had left in the rear, bounded into the room as Dolly Plot and her associates dashed out at the back door and were lost in the darkness ; for the light in the hand of the other lady blew out just as Gridley caught sight of her.

CHAPTER XXXII.

WALDRON'S SICKNESS AND RECOVERY.—HE IS INFORMED OF THE CAPTURE OF ROZELLA.—VISIT OF HIS FRIENDS.—WALDRON'S VISIT TO MERRY MEETING BAY, AND HIS DESPONDENCY.

It was on a mild morning in early autumn, nearly two weeks after the return of the soldiers from Cape Breton, that the sunbeams came into the little bed chamber of Captain Waldron at the house of his only sister, now Mrs. Marine Lee. The fatigue of the war, the excitement of the return, the heartrending disappointment he had met in not meeting his adored Rozella, and, what was a thousand times worse than all the rest, the torturing belief, at the time he fell under the powerful battery of Dolly Plot's tongue, that Rozella had proved false to him and absconded with his bitterest enemy, the depraved Taurus, had bewildered his mind for a time, and induced a severe though short fit of sickness. Dolly Plot, to be sure, with her inherent shrewdness, had in her artful recital to Waldron told the truth, but in such a strange way as to lie most basely in the telling. She had put darkness for light and evil for good in a manner that would have raised a blush on the cheek of a brazen-faced, latter-day politician ; but the violence of the first attack was now over, and Waldron was slowly recovering from the sad effects of that poisonous virus which the venomous fangs of this loathsome serpent had injected into his very heart's blood. On the day of the above-named morning Mrs. Marine Lee

found Waldron so far recovered that she ventured to relate the details of all the events which had transpired from the evening of the presentation of the banner to the night when the Indians burst in upon them at the party at the house of Squire Langdell ; that Marine, herself, and some of the other neighbors had escaped, but many had been carried away, among whom were the whole Langdell family and the Tuftons, and bones had been found in the woods where some of the captives had been burned, which were still lying in the ashes of their torturing fires. She assured him that Taurus must have been the guide of the attacking party of Indians ; for he had been absent ever since the seizure of Janus at the cave, and was seen with them on their arrival and departure. They had also learned from Chocorua's dying speech that Taurus had gone to arouse the Nepissins and Apenaquis, who belonged to the great St. Francis tribe in Canada ; and it was no doubt they who had captured their friends and taken them to their head'quarters to be sold to the French, who were paying large bounties for captives or for their scalps.

To all this Waldron listened with intense interest ; and he felt somewhat relieved to learn that Rozella was in the hands of the Indians, or in any hands save those of Jack Taurus.

"But," asked he, "how came Dolly Plot and her tribe in Squire Langdell's house?"

"I cannot tell," replied Mrs. Lee, "how it happened ; but I suppose, as it was empty and no one claimed ownership over it, they took possession on their own responsibility. It is not a month since I heard that the settlers talked of raising a force and driving them out ; but Mr. Lee advised them that, as we had had so much trouble and bloodshed of late, the settlers should keep quiet until the return of the Mountain Rangers, when they would be

strong enough to risk another contest ; for it is pretty generally believed that Dolly Plot has laid all the plans of nearly all the Indian massacres which have hitherto taken place ; and for that reason the settlers are a little afraid of entering into a contest with her. So no one has interfered with her affairs until the evening of your arrival."

"Well," rejoined the captain, "she got driven out that night at any rate ; and I wonder if she has returned yet."

"I believe not," was the reply ; "but that Janus and the giant returned the next morning and removed her effects to her former residence on the island."

"She shall not be suffered," replied Waldron, "to go unwhipped of justice."

The next day Waldron was so much better that he sat up and received the calls of his comrades, at which his spirits were much revived. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Lee, there were present the Rev. Mr. Moody, Wiley Walcott, and Grizzly Gridley. Their conversation was, for the most part, upon the changes that had taken place in the settlement during their absence at Cape Breton.

"Every thing now appears so gloomy," said the chaplain, "and every face so sad, that it is melancholy and depressing to one's spirits to walk about among the settlers, particularly since we left them on the evening of our departure so cheerful and happy. Now the house where all visitors were met and welcomed with free and openhearted generosity stands empty and desolate, and its beloved inmates driven forth no one knows whither. And Rozella, who was not only the chief attraction of her father's house, but the pride of all Laconia, — whose ear and hand were alike open to hear and relieve the distresses of the poor and needy, — is now, if living, confined among filthy savages in their smoky wigwams, there to suffer for

her beauty and goodness ; and her own sufferings will be greatly enhanced by those of her dear parents ; for, were they safe at home she would bear her own burden of sorrow most heroically. Elsie Tufton, too, and her aged father and sister, are gone. My heart bleeds for poor Elsie ; for she suffered so much when Charles Cutts was murdered that I hoped nothing more of grief or anguish would be added to her already overflowing cup of bitterness." As he closed, the chaplain raised his eyes to those of his silent auditors, Waldron and Walcott, who, with faces bathed in tears, turned from his gaze like children to hide the swelling flood gushing up from the depths of their great souls. The conversation now took a more general turn, and Waldron learned for the first time the frightful extent of the murders and massacres which had been sweeping like a pestilence over the land in the absence of the Mountain Rangers.

He learned that the Indians had been carrying the torch and scalping knife along the whole extent of the frontiers, that scouts had been cut off, garrisons demolished or fired, and that the French and Indians had swept the frontiers and committed depredations all along their borders. Women had been killed and scalped, and young maidens of tender age had been carried off. The brains of infants had been dashed out before their mothers' eyes, who upon their knees were begging and entreating that their lives might be spared and praying to Heaven for aid and succor. Their fields of waving grain had been fired when ripe for the sickle ; and the cattle had been mutilated and left with their tongues cut out, to perish miserably, or were slaughtered for their amusement as well as for food.

Women were compelled to prepare their food and wait upon them ; and, when the savage repast was finished, they cut off the hand that had fed them. All business had been suspended, even the tillage of the fields ; and every wood

and plain was full of darkness, danger, and death. The mills were far away from the latest settlers ; and, when the people could do without bread no longer, they were obliged to rally a company and march to the mills with a strong guard. From the Fort of William and Mary, at the mouth of the Piscataqua, to Bridgeman's Fort, and Fort Dummer, at Number Four, and at Winchester, the inhabitants were ambushed and shot down while at work, and their houses burned. From the White Mountains, through Pennacook, Suncook, and Contoocook, to Hoosac, in Massachusetts, the inhabitants were butchered and scalped in their houses, which were set on fire, and their bodies left to smoulder among the blackened ruins. And in some cases they roasted their prisoners by slow fires, cutting out their tongues while they yet lived, and maiming and disfiguring their bodies in the most barbarous manner that savage ingenuity could invent. Old men and women, bent and bowed down by long years of sorrow, were compelled to run the gantlet, and were struck down by the tomahawk when they could run no farther.

"Hold !" cried Waldron, as the narrator reached the last point, and bounded from his bed with the fury of a tiger ; and leaping for his sword, which hung high upon the rafters of the cabin, brought it with him to the floor.

"Now," cried Waldron, in a loud voice, and flashing the bright weapon high in air, "' Richard's himself again ; ' and this sword shall never be finally sheathed until the French and the St. Francis Indians are overthrown, and Rozella and Elsie, with their friends, liberated and brought in safety to our borders."

Wiley Walcott sprang forward and threw his arms around his neck, while tears of joy gushed from lids where nought but wily and tricky gambols had played until the night they reached Laconia from Cape Breton. Grizzly Gridley next came forward to offer his services ; and, when

their hands met, they came together with a report like that of a pistol. Marine Lee then caught the captain's hand, and, assuming his old sailor vernacular, sang out, "I must launch my craft, boys, on this voyage, if you are determined to go to the leeward." And he, too, struck hands with the captain, as a pledge to aid and assist in the good cause.

"And I will make cartridges," added Mrs. Lee, "until you are ready to start."

"And I," said the chaplain, "will now ask that the blessing and smiles of Providence may accompany you; and of course I would go myself had I not completed an engagement to settle."

The captain then exclaimed, "The first thing to be done is to enlist the soldiers for a new campaign. How many of the old Mountain Rangers will go?"

"Half, I doubt not," replied Lieutenant Gridley; "and the other half can be raised in the adjoining towns, I presume."

"Easily," added Ensign Walcott.

"Is that precious banner safe, ensign," asked Waldron.

"It is," replied the ensign; "or I would not show my unworthy head in your presence, I assure you."

"All right, then," returned the captain; and "All right" responded the others.

"Nil desperandum," said the chaplain, which brought down the house in a perfect storm of applause.

"What is to be done first?" inquired Waldron.

"You are not quite strong enough yet, captain," observed the chaplain, "to take the field, and must lie still for a week to come at least. Meanwhile the lieutenant, ensign, and myself will go among the settlers to ascertain how many will volunteer, and then report to head quarters."

"I am ready to start this very hour," said Gridley.

"And so am I," added Walcott.

"Now," asked the captain, "what is to be done with this foul spirit, Dolly Plot? She will hear of our expedition and overthrow the whole scheme, or send runners to M. Durantage, the French commander-in-chief in Canada, and to the St. Francis tribe, who will be on the defensive or perhaps destroy their prisoners."

"I hardly know," replied Gridley. "She is a hard coin to dispose of."

"And a spurious one, too," added Mrs. Lee.

"I have it at last," said Marine; "a scheme which I think will succeed."

"What is it?" was the general inquiry.

"Let the soldiers," said Lee, "who enlist for the new expedition meet at her hut on the island, and I will then and there make known my plan. I warrant you," continued Lee, "she will not frighten us away as she did the king's bum bailiff when he came to arrest her on a former occasion."

It was a bright, warm day, when Captain Waldron, who had now quite recovered from his illness, was riding along in the vicinity of Merry Meeting Pond. He had been visiting the house of Squire Langdell, and had lingered long in the now vacant rooms, and strolled sadly through the tangled paths of the once beautiful garden, with its little neglected plats of choice flowers, now choked by unsightly weeds and sickly from neglect. Here, in happier days, had he walked with his own chosen Rozella, and here had her merry laugh rung out upon the air like the spring notes of some joyous bird, telling that in her heart at least

"'Twas May — always May."

But now, as he rode on, his heart grew heavy, and his

brow contracted with deep gloom, and irrepressible tears gushed from his eyes. He next approached the house of Robert Tufton. The glass was broken in the windows of the lonely dwelling ; the fences around the premises had fallen down ; and the doors of the dilapidated barn creaked and groaned dismally as they swung loose upon their rusty hinges. The grass had grown rank and tall before the house and upon the embankment where the light feet of the sunny-faced Elsie had so often trod as she tripped out to welcome his approach ; and his grief at the utter loneliness and desolation of the scene was scarcely less poignant than it was at the house of Squire Langdell. He reined his horse around the shady side of the forsaken dwelling ; and there sat his old companion in arms, Ensign Walcott, with his handkerchief pressed to his eyes and bathed in tears. The two brave soldiers, who in so many bloody conflicts had gazed with unflinching steadiness into the fierce and glaring eyes of their savage foes, now melted into tears before each other's look. Neither spoke ; and the next moment the captain's horse, as if aware of the feelings of his rider, wheeled and bore him rapidly from the melancholy scene. As he passed the rude causeway over the little rippling stream which still gurgled musically as ever, but whose silver chime seemed to the sad heart of Waldron to toll the passing knell of the departed dear ones, he became so absorbed in his mournful reflections that he dropped the reins upon his horse's neck and allowed him to go whither he would. Ere long his horse stopped with a suspicious snort ; and, looking up, he saw the blackened ruins of poor Grovenor's house, and almost fancied he could hear the dying groans of his wife and little ones, so dear to his heart. "Here," soliloquized he, "is the dwelling that was wrapped in devouring flame by the torch of Chocorua, and a mother with her innocent babes was consumed by the raging element, for the crime of feeding his

hungry son. But the life of the fell destroyer paid the penalty, though it was but a poor insurance against further destruction."

He now passed on, encountering the remnants of herds of cattle and flocks of sheep which had been spared from the barbarity of the savage foe; and they, too, seemed to share in the general gloom. As he reached the once joyous Merry Meeting grove his heart beat faster and his eyes were again deluged with tears. Every thing here was as he had last seen it; and he almost expected that he should find the lovely Forest Queen still crowned with a wreath of flowers and sitting upon her sylvan throne. But the grove was silent and lonely, and no mirthful voices broke the still solitude. The sylvan throne was fast mouldering in decay; and the May pole was lying upon the ground, almost concealed from view by matted vines and creeping evergreens. As he attempted to raise it from its mossy bed he started back with a shudder and dropped it; for intertwined around the slender shaft was a monstrous serpent. "Alas!" cried he, "in like manner has the fair Rozella been enchained by serpents loathsome as yourself." Bathing his hot and fevered brow in the cool waters of the pond, and mounting his horse, he rode homewards. He returned by another road, and soon reached the grove where Whitefield's voice was wont to ring with such matchless power and thrilling eloquence, and where he had so often sat with Rozella, spellbound and entranced with the glowing fervor of his resistless appeals, and hung upon every accent of that persuasive tongue which sent forth tones of rich and varied melody.

"Where," said he, "is now that faith and hope which, like an anchor to the soul, kept the doubting fast and firm in the belief that Heaven for our good overrules the designs of men and will keep safe and secure from harm

whoever confidently believes that all things work together for his good? How often do the good and worthy suffer by the malicious plots of the wicked, who are, in the mysterious dispensation of divine Providence, allowed to go on in sin and iniquity seemingly unpunished! Even a Whitefield's voice could not raise the drooping hearts and fallen hopes of lonely Laconia now."

So saying he pursued his way leisurely homeward, revolving in his mind the inscrutable plan of the divine economy. It might have been as easy in earlier and more primitive days to believe; but never was a faith that knows no faltering needed more than now. When men believed that this small earth was the only inhabited world that the great Maker had spoken into existence, and was all that he had peopled and all that he had supervised, it was easy to pray, and believe that he heard their prayers and guided all their affairs. Then a Paul or a Whitefield could preach in faith, and a tender Lydia or Rozella could inhale the atmosphere of the same as easily as common air. And, while the true faith of ancient believers was as easily acquired, it would seem as if there never was a time when the immortal mind had more need to live by it than now, under the accumulated light of expansive knowledge and science. Now, instead of the earth's standing still, as was then supposed, it turns upon its axis and dashes along its orbit with such frightful velocity that the human mind cannot realize it even when the figures are placed before our eyes. And instead of the earth being the only world He created, and the planets and stars being mere lights for our convenience, it is now but a speck among the dazzling millions that dot the immensity of space, all whirling along their pathway in orbits so vast and at distances so inconceivably remote that our little orb dwindles into comparative insignificance.

There are the Pleiades and Hyades, balancing with

Orion the flying race of worlds; the Great Lion of the upper heavens, reaping with his starry sickle the sheaves of Time from the broad harvest field of eternity and transporting them on wheeling spheres of immeasurable orbit to their unknown inhabitants. There, too, is Neptune, so far away in the distant heavens that the entire earth's orbit, comprising the millions of miles she travels from farthest north to extremest south, does not form a base sufficient to measure the distant angle. And still farther on may be another earth as far from it as our own. Ah, we need a faith far stronger than was possessed by some of olden time to believe that our own little globe is recognized among the myriads of larger orbs. And if these men were staggered and confounded by the comparatively simple theories of their day, what, in the intense blaze of science at the present, must our faith be, to enable us to believe that God watches over such worthless worms as we, and will own and acknowledge us beyond the stars! How strong a faith is requisite to enable us to lay hold on Heaven in perfect confidence and say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God"!

A few days after the above visit of Waldron to Merry Meeting Bay the soldiers met at Dolly's hut to dispose of her *vi et armis*. But Dolly fastened the door and endeavored to frighten them away.

"It's of no use," said Walcott; "if you have driven off the attorney and the king's officer, you have no power over his majesty's soldiers. It won't work."

"No," added Marine Lee; "the celestial ship I once saw fall from the cloudy ocean of the skies goes down to-day, never more to reappear."

"One part of that story of the Phantom Ship," said Waldron, as he came up with Coffin by his side, "we have

always doubted somewhat, and we have just been discussing its probability. We can hardly believe she ever sailed in the golden sea of purity and was wafted by heavenly breezes, as you stated. And, allowing that such had been the case, we are at a loss to know how you, a stranger in Laconia, should be conversant with the fact."

"I supposed," replied Lee, "that point would be questioned long before now; but it seems you were too much interested in the marvellousness of the story to ask for proof of its truth. Now, 'tis but a short story; and I can tell it by the time Dolly opens the door."

"No doubt of that," said Coffin, laughing, "if you finish it between now and winter."

"Let us have the story," responded the company.

"You must be short," added the captain; "for we must finish our business as soon as possible."

"Ay, ay, sir," cried Marine, and continued: "Be it known, then, that I was somewhat acquainted with Dolly Plot in England, and saw her frequently. I am ready to acknowledge that the society in which she moved was far above my own; and, therefore, I knew her much better than she knew me. I have frequently driven her carriage to some of the first families of Old Cambridge, where she was received as one of their equals, and have often seen her waited upon to it by some of the proudest peers and lords of the realm. A gentleman of high rank, to whom she seemed much attached, lost his wife by a sudden and short illness, and it was suspected that she had been poisoned. After her death her stomach was examined, and a large quantity of arsenic discovered therein. It was subsequently ascertained that Miss Dolly Plot had taken a walk with the deceased on the day of her death, in the course of which they called at a place of refreshment and partook of a cup of coffee and a hot bunn, and the lady was taken violently ill soon afterwards. It was, more-

over, found that Dolly had purchased arsenic at an apothecary's but a few days previous. These reports, coming to the ears of Dolly, caused her to leave before a legal investigation could be had. She took lodgings in one of the most dark and obscure streets in London; but, finding the officers of justice were in pursuit of her, she soon left the country; and no one knew of her whereabouts until I saw and recognized her a few days after my arrival in Laconia. As most of the parties were dead and the whole matter nearly forgotten, I knew it would be impossible to prove her guilt, and therefore did not inform against her. Now, gentlemen, what shall be done with Dolly Plot."

"Hang her!" shouted the soldiers. "Let the old mud-scow go to the bottom, never to rise again!"

"But," continued Lee, "I have a plan by which we can get rid of her without shedding her blood, although I don't think hanging any too good for her."

"Give us the plan, then," responded the soldiers.

"It is this," answered Lee; "that, as she has once been sentenced to be confined on one of the islands of Winnipiseogee, she shall now be taken to one of them in the middle of the lake, on which is an old fishing camp, and supplied with fishing tackle as a means of subsistence; and if she ever leaves it she shall be shot as an outlaw. And as a proof that we mean what we say on this last point, let the fate of the outlaw Dick Janus, who was yesterday shot dead by a settler whose name we have not yet learned, be an assurance and a warning to all evil doers so long as the mountain from which he was tumbled shall stand and bear the name of 'Tumble-down Dick,' which we this day gave it."

Dolly, who from the open window had listened attentively to Lee's narrative, gave a most awful screech when she heard the announcement of the death of her friend Janus, and wept and wailed long and loudly. She de-

clared that she would rather a thousand times be shot outright than banished to that lonely island ; but the soldiers drowned her wailings by crying, " Away with her to the island ! " and then proceeded to burst through the door. Dolly stoutly resisted and fought most resolutely, and Mag came to the rescue bravely ; but all to no purpose. Dolly was seized, secured, and with her effects carried in a cart to the lake, and thence rowed to one of the middle islands, where she reigned and ruled queen of the island and mistress of the lake. Mag, against whom there were no very grave charges, was allowed to pack her bundle, and commanded to leave their borders in twenty-four hours ; which she did, and never again made her appearance. The soldiers, however, did not leave the old hut, which had so long been the haunt of all the evil-disposed persons in the settlement, without kindling a good fire in the middle of the floor ; and when they marched away the thick volumes of smoke and the flashing tongues of flame which rose from the spot announced that the building was fast crumbling to ashes and the whole place being purified by fire.

The other stranger who, it will be recollected, on the night of Waldron and Walcott's return came forward to throw light on the loving couples in the entry, and who appeared to be a beautiful and superior woman, could not be found. She had been the theme of all who saw her ; for so innocent was her mien and so surprised her air as she gazed upon the tumult of that eventful evening, that they concluded she must have fallen into that den of depravity by some mistake, and was unaware of the profession of its inmates. She had made a deep impression and left a lasting mark upon the minds of all ; and not upon the mind only, but upon the heart, of one who had heretofore bade defiance to all the enticing charms and wily ways of woman. That one was no other than the brave

Lieutenant Grizzly Gridley, who, ever since that fatal night when he first saw her, had been haunted by visions of that sweet face, both in his sleeping and waking hours, in his goings out and comings in. He had even gone so far as to visit Dolly Plot to gain information of her whereabouts, who, after taking his gold, quietly replied that she neither knew nor could tell where she was to be found. She said she had never seen her before that night, when she came in very much fatigued, and wished to remain for the night; that she had given her leave to do so, and she had not seen her since.

Sorely did Gridley grieve over his unsuccessful search for the fair stranger who had made so deep an impression upon his hitherto obdurate heart; and although some of his friends endeavored to weaken the ardor of his attachment by suggesting that the fact of her being with such associates was against her, Gridley's faith in her purity and goodness remained unshaken; and he was satisfied that in this case at least, although she was found in bad company, she was entirely beyond suspicion.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SOLDIERS MEET FOR A NEW EXPEDITION AT BUCK'S HORN INN.—ARRIVAL OF COMICAL PLUMP AND GEORGE ENGLISH. —THE DEPARTURE.

It was a foggy morning, about the 1st of September, when the soldiers of Laconia were seen to leave their homes, with their stuffed knapsacks upon their backs and guns upon their shoulders, and shape their course for the Buck's Horn Inn. The morning was not only foggy, but dark and somewhat drizzly, and the mountains were concealed from view as well as the sun. The tall grass still uncropped by the roadside stood bending beneath the load of accumulated moisture, with its seeded head bowed down as if in sympathy with the sorrowing inhabitants of the settlement, while pearly teardrops ran down its bearded face. The seared and hardened leaves, humid with fog and mist, adhered to the soldier's foot as he hurried through the pathless forest and down the precipitous hills. The crow, clad in his blue-black dreadnaught, stalked gravely over the stubble of the cleared fields, or sent up his hoarse caw as he flapped his broad wings over the slimy pool in search of some sedentary frog, who in his turn konked his "No you don't," as he shot like a wedge into the muddy bottom. The soldiers hurried on, regardless of mist, fog, or rain; and by eight o'clock every volunteer had arrived at the rendezvous, the Buck's Horn Inn.

While the soldiers were assembling, Captain Waldron, who had been the first to reach the inn, had remained seated in the Dutchman's dining room, apparently absorbed in gloomy contemplations. He first balanced the chances for and against the success of the expedition and the probabilities of his being able to recapture his idolized Rozella.

"True," soliloquized he, "we have conquered Louisburg; but none of the king's officers or soldiers have been successful against the French at the west or in the Canadas. The brave Colonel Meserve has been taken prisoner; and the heroic New Hampshire soldiers not only taken, but many of them brutally murdered. The gallant Colonel Munroe of the thirty-fifth British regiment was overwhelmed at Fort William Henry, and most of his soldiers barbarously slaughtered by the Indians under the command of the Marquis de Montcalm, whose combined forces of French and Indians we must meet and conquer ere we can proceed to the enterprise for which we are assembled. Lord Howe and Braddock, the two brightest stars in the military galaxy of England, have fallen; and in all directions misfortune seems to attend us."

So saying Waldron arose, and, putting his hand to his brow, stood for some time mute and motionless. "Fallen! fallen!" again pursued he; "'how have the mighty fallen!' and, as nearly as I can foresee, our fate will be the same. Well, let us fall, then, if we must. Our blood is no better than that of Howe, Braddock, Meserve, and thousands of others who have been led on to butchery against the French."

"And Rozella, — what of her?" cried a deep voice at his side as a heavy hand fell upon his shoulder.

"Shall be free!" shouted Waldron, grasping fiercely the hilt of his sword, as, looking up, he saw Gridley and Walcott by his side, "or Britton Waldron will sleep the sleep of death with a smile upon his lips by her side."

"Elsie Tufton, too," cried Ensign Walcott, "shall be free, or I sleep the same sleep by your side."

"And O," exclaimed Lieutenant Gridley, "the fair stranger, whose lovely image haunts me ever, shall be found, or I, too, shall fall in the cold embrace of death."

"Hurrah!" shouted a sharp voice; "two officers in love with ghosts, and t'other with a shadow."

A general roar now rang through the old inn, and all looked in the direction whence the sound proceeded. There stood a little plump soldier, whom Nature had stamped from head to foot with her most grotesque and comical expression. He was about five feet in height, crosseyed, with his face and hands covered with freckles; and what little hair he had was nearly white.

The captain now gave orders to the sergeant to parade the company; which order was immediately obeyed, and the officers notified that the order had been complied with, who thereupon walked out and took their positions. The soldiers were still laughing at Comical Plump, as they had nicknamed the little soldier we have just described, who now stood in the centre of the company with a huge knapsack, which fell almost to his knees and projected several inches above his old white wool hat, on his back, and an old queen's arms upon his shoulder. Some of the soldiers objected to Plump's joining the volunteers on account of his youth, and said that his mother would be on after him before they had marched a mile. Comical then told them plumply that he was probably older than they took him to be, and that his old gun would throw buck shot as straight as any of their guns. But the soldiers, who were mostly tall and noble-looking men and prided themselves upon the good appearance of their regiment, now seriously objected to the enrolment of the little soldier; and, on the question being put to vote, it was almost unanimously decided that Comical Plump have leave to stay at home.

Thereupon the poor little fellow sneaked across the road, looking quite crestfallen and dejected, and, seating himself upon a large rock, began to weep bitterly. The boys gathered around him and heard him say, "I'll be revenged ! I'll join the French !" and after pausing a few minutes, as if reflecting, he continued, "No, I won't do that ; I'll do good for evil."

The soldiers, who thought it of small consequence whether he went or not, and, moreover, thought they were really showing him an act of kindness by refusing what they considered his absurd request, soon forgot the matter ; and the more easily, perhaps, by reason of what now followed ; for at the command of the captain the ensign raised aloft the still furled flag, and the captain advanced to the front and exclaimed, "Gentlemen soldiers, I am rejoiced to see you all so prompt at your posts and in such good spirits on this our important enterprise ; and although it is a dark and gloomy morning, yet I trust that soon, not only the sun, but heaven, will smile upon this expedition." As he closed, the banner, the same old precious banner presented by Rozella, unrolled its silken folds, and at the same instant the sun burst through the misty fog and shone out in all his glory. Long and repeated cheers broke from the throats of the Mountain Rangers ; and as they ceased the quick gallop of a horse's feet was heard pattering along the muddy valley road, and all eyes were instantly turned in the direction of the sound.

An elegantly formed soldier in a blue uniform, with a gun lashed behind his saddle, was seen upon a large bay horse, dashing furiously towards them. He had the air of an English officer ; and as he reined up in front of the company his horse seemed nearly blown with hard riding, and the sweat, as it streamed from his panting sides, mingled with the blood of his deeply-rowelled flanks. As the

soldier stopped he exclaimed, "I would see Captain Waldron, of the Mountain Rangers of Laconia."

The captain took off his cocked hat, and, bowing low, replied, "I have the pleasure, sir, to be at your service."

The stranger raised his military cap in return, and, bowing until his black, curling locks rested upon his horse's mane, continued, "I am the king's messenger."

"I await your message," replied Waldron, somewhat excited.

The messenger again bowed with a bright smile, and said, "Good news!"

A loud cheer now broke from the excited soldiers, who had feared he was the bearer of disastrous tidings; and the stranger continued: "Be it known, then, that at the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle England declared a peace when there was none, and gave up by that treaty the Island of Cape Breton — that Cape Breton which was won by the valor of the Americans generally, and of the Mountain Rangers of Laconia particularly; for without them it could never have been taken; but, notwithstanding, it has been given up."

"Shame! shame!" cried the soldiers.

"Furthermore," continued he, "it is well known in England that all the battles which have as yet been fought upon American soil have proved disastrous to her, and have resulted in favor of France; and it is generally believed that it is all owing to the mismanagement or imbecility of the old class of officers, like Generals Johnson and Shirley and Colonel Munroe, that all these disasters have befallen our common cause. In consequence of such an unbroken series of disasters, the people of England grew indignant and demanded a new ministry. That demand, gentlemen, has been acceded to; and now at the head of that ministry stands no other name than that of the great

statesman, William Pitt, Earl of Chatham. One of the first acts of his ministry has been to present a long list of old and inactive lieutenant and major generals to be removed ; and he has promoted to important posts young and meritorious officers, among whom are Wolfe, Amherst, Monkton, Murray, and Prideaux. He has already marked out a plan for this campaign in which the Mountain Rangers are now enlisted. Three armies are now raised and marching to the field under his directions, and are to attack the French simultaneously at their three strongest posts. Prideaux, with the provincial forces and the warlike Iroquois, are to attack Niagara, and then descend the St. Lawrence and take Montreal. The brave Wolfe is to go by the way of Cape Breton, ascend the St. Lawrence and attack Quebec. And Amherst, whose army of twelve thousand men the Mountain Rangers are to join at Ticonderoga and Crown Point, having taken these fortresses, is to enter the St. Lawrence by the River Sorel and join the army at Quebec under the brave Wolfe. A brother of the lamented Captain Lovewell of the Paugus fight will take the command of a thousand men from New Hampshire, which force you are requested to join at Number Four and march to Ticonderoga under his command. And although my message is from the king, through his prime minister, to General Amherst, the commander of a portion of his majesty's forces as well as the militia of New Hampshire, yet I am but a private individual, doing what I could to forward the expedition, and have been honored by being appointed bearer of these despatches. But, gentlemen, my mission is now finished ; and, as I am anxious to join the army, I now offer myself as a rank and file soldier to the Mountain Rangers, than which no company will march to the scene of action whose ranks I would sooner join."

A general response of hearty welcome resounded from the entire company ; and Captain Waldron stepped for-

ward and gave the young soldier his hand and a cordial welcome.

"I will resign my commission," enthusiastically cried Lieutenant Gridley, "in favor of the young hero."

"And so will I," said Ensign Walcott.

"No, gentlemen," responded the stranger; "I shall not accept any commission; still I thank you a thousand times for your generous offers. The only name and title I shall consent to bear is that by which I am now designated — George English. But I will ask as a favor that I may be allowed to take along my faithful horse, for my own convenience and that of any of my companions who may choose to ride in turn."

A unanimous consent was given, the fife and drum struck up, and the gallant band of Mountain Rangers took their departure from the borders of Laconia.

"They have all gone," soliloquized little Comical Plump, as he wiped the tears from his eyes with the back of his freckled, fat hand; then, standing up, he looked at himself as if he, too, was a new comer with whom he was just becoming acquainted. "Well," said he, "I must confess I am not so elegantly formed as that new comer upon the horse; but, then, perhaps George English will prove a traitor and destroy the whole company. I have half a mind to do so; and I think I should were it not for Rozella Langdell, who has ever been so kind to our folks. She always called when any of us were sick, and spoke so pleasantly, and did so much to relieve us, that I would risk a thousand lives and let all the French in Canada go to Tophet to save her. If Captain Waldron had only known what good friends we are he would have taken me along — I know he would. But I guess I was wrong in thinking George English might prove a traitor, now that I remember how his eyes looked; for such eyes I never before saw in a man's head, nor in a woman's either, except that

of Rozella Langdell. They were as clear as a mountain lake, and so deep too! Why, I felt when looking into them as I have before now when on a cloudless day I have laid upon the banks of the Cocheco and gazed into the far-off depths of heaven. There can be no treachery in such eyes as those. But, then, I don't believe they are any truer, after all, than my old cross grays, or will do any better service. I should, to be sure, prefer some like his, so that Lieutenant Gridley and Ensign Walcott would offer to resign their commissions for me as I rode up with a message from the king, and have some other Comical Plump sit crying on this stone because the soldiers voted him out of the company. But I did not form myself, and don't think I ought to be blamed for my looks; and I wear my cross eyes for the same reason that I do my old white hat — because I can't get any better. But I have a good large knapsack full of bread and cheese and powder and shot; so I'll not go home yet, any how. I must sit here a while and study what to do next; for I want Rozella and the old squire's folks back here as much as any of them, I can tell them. If they can see straighter, they can't see any farther, than I can. Now, Plump is captain of his own company; and when I, Comical, have studied out a plan, I will report to head quarters; so take a seat, captain, and I will report soon."

And down he sat again upon the stone, the tears still standing in his eyes and his face still sad and melancholy. But wipe away your tears, my good Comical; you will give a good report of yourself yet.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CAPTURE OF THE LANGDELLS AND TUFTONS.—DESCRIPTION OF THE MOUNTAIN PASSES AND SCENERY.—BURNING OF GROVENOR.—ARRIVAL AT ST. FRANCIS.—STARK AND EASTMAN RUN THE GANTLET.

How frequently it occurs in this strange life of mingled gloom and sunshine that our heaviest woes lie nearest us when all seems glad and gay, and our sweetest joys are close behind the clouds of darkest obscurity! And often, when passion seems not only conquered but chained beneath our feet, some sudden temptation snaps the chain asunder, and the foe rises to the assault more fierce and formidable than before. The oars of our determination are powerless when dipped in the bright waters of our hopes ever so expertly unless Heaven swells the sail and speeds our frail bark over life's treacherous waters to the haven of our rest.

When Paugus and Chocorua had fallen, Rozella and her parents, as well as their neighbors, supposed their last foe was destroyed; and Squire Langdell, thinking the Indian wars now at an end, had sent to England for his other daughter, who had remained with her uncle to complete her education. The prospects for peace and domestic tranquillity, so far as they could discern, were never so bright and flattering; but, beyond their ken, never were they darker or more gloomy. The happiest evening they had ever passed in social enjoyment was spent under the

very eye and almost within arms' length of savage foes, ready to leap upon and devour their unsuspecting prey ; and as the little cloud of mystery which had rested upon the enchanted wolf had passed away, another and more threatening cloud, black with sorrow and surcharged with death, hung over and lowered low above their devoted heads.

The Indians who had been guided through the forests and mountain passes by Jack-Taurus were mostly from the Nepissins and Apenaquis, who were still under the St. Francis tribe. The chief of the band was a St. Francis Indian named Titigaw, under whom was another chief called Peeroon. The Indians had arrived the evening previous to the "wolf party," and had lain concealed in the adjacent woods near the house of Squire Langdell, and had thus been able to watch narrowly all the movements of their unsuspecting victims. When all were assembled at the house of Squire Langdell, they had entered the now vacant houses of the neighboring settlers, and, taking such articles of food and clothing as they wished, bound them upon the horses which they had taken from the barns, which they then led and fastened near to the squire's house, so as to be ready for an immediate departure. The horses that had been ridden by the settlers to the "gathering" were destined for the female captives ; for the journey was long, and the bounty offered by the French governor of Canada for live prisoners large and tempting. Among those who were carried away captives were Squire and Mrs. Langdell, Rozella and the Tuftons, Owega and several others.

Among those who were slain when the savages rushed into the house were Bragg Pike and Deacon Stone, who, it will be recollected, boasted during the evening of their prowess in shooting Chocorua ; and the others they bound with cords, among whom was Captain Grovenor, whom they reserved for a more terrible death. In their haste

to leave, the Indians had allowed the females but a few moments in which to gather up such articles of wearing apparel as came readiest to hand, without much regard to comfort or convenience.

Owega had caught up her wolfskin to take it along with her ; but Peeroon, who was originally from the same tribe as herself, seeing her intention, assured her that it would be of no use, for her trick had been discovered and the charm was now gone. Owega threw it down ; but, as the Indian turned his back, she caught it up again, and, quick as thought, placed it at the bottom of her little bundle.

The route taken by the Indians led directly to Fort Point at Merry Meeting Bay, which place they reached a little after sunrise the following morning. After a light breakfast in the old camp of Captain Lovewell, which was still standing, they took the war path of the Pequawketts, leading up the eastern shore of Lake Winnipiseogee, and marched hurriedly on. Yet so slow was their progress that they had but reached the Wolf's Neck when night overtook the sad and wearied cavalcade. The captives were obliged to sleep upon the bare ground as best they could, for a sudden thaw had carried off the entire body of snow ; while the Indians made use of the blankets they had taken from the vacant houses of their captives. Rozella and Elsie were sitting by the camp fire, when, for the first time since they started, the former caught sight of Taurus, who now made his appearance at the fire, giving her one of his most malicious looks as he glared into her calm though sorrowful face. She screamed at his sudden appearance as though a ferocious tiger had leaped down before her, and averted her face from the glare of the monster, while the Indians as well as the captives sprang forward to ascertain the cause of her sudden outcry. Old Titigaw, with a wise look peculiar to "great medicine"

men, declared that the handsome white squaw was sick and needed medicine ; but Owega explained to him how Taurus had persecuted and wronged Rozella, and was the executor of all the plans and plots that had been laid for her destruction, and added that his removal from her sight would at once restore her to health.

"Ugh!" grunted the old chief. "Young squaw heart-sick?"

"No doubt," replied Owega, "that she is heartsick of seeing so vile a creature as he is ; and she demands that he be removed from the lodge."

"What right has white squaw to make such a demand?" asked the chief.

"As prisoners of war we have certain rights," replied Rozella ; "and those rights we shall expect and demand even from savages."

"And you may demand them," returned the gruff voice of Taurus ; "but it will be a long while before your demand is obeyed."

Rozella made no reply.

"The sensitive young lady cannot speak to her future husband — eh?" continued Taurus.

"My future murderer!" indignantly responded Rozella.

"Ay," replied Taurus, "even so, unless she yields to my wishes and becomes my wife."

"And that," replied Rozella, "will never be. All the infamous arts which your venomous heart can conjure, aided by the subtlety of that old serpent Dolly Plot herself, will never sink me so low as that."

"The Forest Queen," resumed Taurus —

"Don't call me Forest Queen," interrupted Rozella, "or take a name I shall ever cherish upon your lips."

"Aha!" sneered Taurus. "And did I not assist in giving you that name? and was it not my hand that helped to place the flowery coronal upon your youthful brow?"

"And was not Satan once an angel of light and Dolly Plot an angel of attraction?" asked Rozella.

"All that may be," answered Taurus; "but it does not apply to me; for my purpose was fixed and the same from the outset. From the first hour I saw you, even when I placed the floral crown upon your brow, I resolved to make you my wife, and from that day to this my only study has been to this end; and at last I have got you firmly and fully in my power, whence you will never depart except as my wedded wife. There are no bog holes for me to run into in these woods; and, if there were, there is no Wenane to assist in my fall. That foot is where it won't assist you more."

"And I," retorted Rozella, "have cause to wish that your own had been as cold as that of the faithful Wenane long ago."

"But it is not," said Taurus, "but has full power to carry you to your grave; for, by the terms of my contract with the Indians, I have the power to take you and your parents back to your home in case you consent to become my wife."

"Never! never!" replied Rozella, casting an affectionate look upon her dear old father and mother, who were sitting in the utmost dejection by the blazing fire.

"No!" exclaimed both her parents at the same instant, while her mother raised her eyes and her clasped hands to heaven and continued, "No, never! Let us all die together first; and may Heaven give the child strength that she be not swerved from principle for our sakes, but may her strength be made sufficient for even this hour of weakness."

"No!" replied Rozella, resolutely, and casting so firm and self-possessed a look upon the baffled Taurus that he turned, abashed, before her gaze. "I would rather be stung to death by scorpions and become the food of vipers."

Taurus thereupon turned to Titigaw and muttered something in a low tone to the old chief, who scowled and replied, "No! no!" whereupon Taurus retreated to the other side of the camp fire, and, throwing his tall form at full length upon his blanket, was soon lost in sleep.

The other inmates of the lodge now drew their blankets around them, and in a brief space all, both captors and captives, were locked in tranquil repose, except Mr. Tuf-ton, who had to relate for the hundredth time to his daughters the sad fate of their little brother, who was carried away, as he always supposed, when about three years old, and he was still in hopes to find him among some of the tribes. The night passed quietly; and the next morning, as soon as the first faint streaks of light appeared in the east, the savages aroused their tired and sorrowing captives. After breakfast, which consisted of the meat, bread, and such other provisions as they had taken from the houses of the settlers, and which were carried by the captives, they proceeded on their way after the manner of the day before until they came to the vicinity of Red Hill, when they halted for consultation. They resolved to divide the captives, lest they should be overtaken by the settlers, and one squad, under the guidance of Peeroon, should proceed by the way of Pequawkett, while the other should take the "middle route," as it was termed, under the leadership of the old chief Titigaw. The captives were accordingly divided — the route of Elsie Tufton, her father, and several others being up the eastern passage by Pequawkett, now Conway; and Rozella, together with her father and mother and the two sisters of Elsie, went forward by the middle route.

The latter division passed over the little stream between the beautiful Winnipiseogee and Squam Lake and proceeded on their toilsome way until they struck the Pemigewasset, up whose banks they continued until they arrived

at its source. Rozella occasionally caught sight of the foxskin cap of Taurus far in the rear, following his prey like a stanch bloodhound ; but he did not again intrude himself upon her notice until they had passed the grand old mountains. The Indians of all tribes and localities held these mountains in the most devout reverence, and never came into their awful presence without manifesting their sense of veneration by various acts of worship and adoration. Nor is this to be wondered at, since from their first discovery men of the noblest and most cultivated intellect have never stood among their wonderful sublimities without a feeling of inexpressible awe nearly akin to that of religious veneration. It was not strange, then, that the red man, as often as he passed them, should stop and view with superstitious reverence the surpassing grandeurs which he every where encountered. Such was the case on the present occasion ; and when the weary band reached these Crystal Hills both captors and captives forgot for a time their respective cares, so completely rapt were they all, and particularly the young ladies, in the contemplation of their unparalleled beauty and magnificence. As they followed the banks of the stream they first came to what has since been named the Flume. Rozella, who, with the two sisters of Elsie, was in advance of the other captives, raised her hands in delighted astonishment, and with sparkling eyes cried out, —

“ O, mother dear, come quickly and see this tremendous chasm, cut directly up into the bosom of the mountain, with its granite walls and mural precipices rising on each side a hundred feet at least ! ”

“ Yes,” responded Agnes Tufton ; “ and the insides are as regularly and truly cut in the solid rock as if done by the chisel of some skilful workman.”

The whole party now stopped and examined more closely this wonderful natural curiosity.

"How long, father," asked Rozella, "should you think this chasm to be?"

"I will see," said the squire, as he paced with measured strides its rocky bottom. "It is over eight hundred feet."

All save Mrs. Langdell now passed into the Flume; but the mist and vapor that rose were so damp and chill they were forced to retreat, for it seemed like a cold granite grave. As they were passing out the squire exclaimed, —

"Look overhead, young ladies, and see that immense granite rock caught and suspended in the very jaws of the chasm, some seventy feet, I should judge, above our heads! That stone must weigh at the least a hundred tons."

"But how," asked Rozella, "could it have gotten there? I think," continued she, "some Titan must have sportingly hurled it there from the lofty mountain peak yonder. How wildly solemn seems the roar of the water as it rushes through the chasm!"

They now turned their attention to the beautiful cascade, which they had passed without noticing particularly as they went up, and Rozella exclaimed as she met her mother, who had remained behind, —

"O, what a splendid cascade! Never before did I behold one so enchanting."

"I venture to say," returned Mrs. Langdell, "that it is the most beautiful cascade in the world."

"Look," cried Rozella, "at the difference in color of the water in the chasm and the cascade! That in the latter seems to have been filtered and purified as its silver globules sparkle in the sunbeams, and the rock over which it runs is polished as smooth as glass."

"How gradual, too," observed the squire, "is its descent! I can give a pretty close guess as to the height of its fall as we pass down to its bottom."

When they reached the foot of the fall the squire announced its length to be over six hundred feet. The

Indians, who, with the exception of Titigaw and one or two others, had never before been in these romantic solitudes, seemed as much astonished and delighted as the captives themselves, and wished to linger longer among their varied and picturesque beauties. Proceeding onward, they passed up the stream until they reached the Pool, the sight of which drew from Rozella fresh exclamations of delight.

"How far," inquired she, "is it from the brink of the towering walls to the water below?"

"Nearly one hundred and fifty feet, in my judgment," replied the squire; "and the water must be about fifty feet deep."

They next visited the Basin, which was of smaller dimensions, but of equal beauty. The jutting rocks which formed the beautiful grotto, and the bright, mackerel color of the water, made the *tout ensemble* most enchanting. The diameter of the Basin was from thirty to forty feet, and its circumference about sixty. So perfectly clear and transparent was the water that they could discern the pebbles at the bottom quite plainly; and on the squire's asking Rozella how deep she thought the water to be, she replied that it seemed about three or four feet in depth.

"We will measure its depth," said the squire; and taking a line from his pocket, to which he attached a small stone, threw it down to the bottom. On drawing it up again, they would hardly credit their senses when they found the depth, as indicated by the wet line, to be over twenty feet.

The old chief now hurried them forward, and they soon passed the great Notch and came to the Old Man of the Mountains, or the Great Sachem of the Red Man, as the Indians termed what was an exact profile of a human face apparently chiselled in the solid granite, and standing boldly

out from the mountain cliff full two thousand feet above the little pond at its base. As they came suddenly in view of this guardian genius the Indians were struck with such reverential fear and dread that they prostrated themselves upon the ground in abject humility and bowed their heads in the dust, so awestruck were they with its grandeur. And the captives also were affected with feelings similar in kind, though not in degree, to those of the savages, at the unbounded magnificence of the glorious spectacle before them.

"Since the minds of the savage and civilized races are alike susceptible to scenes of beauty and grandeur," observed Squire Langdell, "why are these races so utterly unlike each other in their treatment of those whom they consider their enemies, especially when these are in their power? The English would fain show themselves friendly to the Indians, but meet with nothing from them but cruelty, torture, and death."

"I cannot think," replied Rozella, "there is so wide a difference between them; for the English, you must admit, were the first aggressors, in taking the lands and hunting grounds of the red man. And as regards inhumanity, I have never seen the difference of which you speak. All men, under the same temptations and inducements, are equally frail and criminal and equally unjust and cruel."

"Indeed!" rejoined the squire. "Then your good mother and Dolly Plot are upon the same level, are they, so far as regards their liability to fall?"

Rozella smiled, and, pointing up to the great granite face in the clouds, playfully answered, —

"That, father, is not the question before the house, of which that solemn old man up there seems to be chairman. The question is general or national, and not individual. Of course I would not compare the Lady Langdell with Dolly Plot, or Wenane with Taurus; but you see, by the

names I have mentioned, that some of the English are a thousand times worse than some of the Indians."

"Certainly," replied the squire; "but, since you make the question a national one, will you please inform me what nation save the savages carries its punishment, or its tortures even, to such a cruel and barbarous excess? The Indian binds his victim to the stake, tears out his hair and nails, pulls out his tongue by the roots, forces out his eyes, fills his flesh with sharp splinters of lighted pitchwood, by which he is literally roasted alive, and winds up by consuming his tortured body over a slow fire. Was there ever any thing heard of which could equal this inhuman and fiendish cruelty?"

"It is most dreadful, certainly," replied Rozella; "but will my father please consider for a moment the punishments and tortures common among the ancient Romans in the politest and palmiest days of the empire? They sewed up the poor wretches on whom they wished to wreak their vengeance in sacks along with venomous serpents, and then threw them into the sea to perish miserably. They broiled them in hot chains of iron and fried them in caldrons of boiling oil; they threw them among ferocious and famished wild beasts, amid the applauding shouts of a delighted multitude, that they might feast their eyes and ears upon their dying agonies and groans; and when their torn and mangled limbs had been severed from their lacerated bodies by the cruel fangs of the lion or tiger, and their heart's blood run away in the awful struggle for life, they were left to be devoured by the beasts they had fought. And what greater cruelty is there in the torture inflicted by the Indians than in the confining of a man in an open trough, and smearing his naked body with honey, that he might be stung to death by wasps and bees? or in flaying him alive, and then stretching out his skin before his dying eyes? And yet this was the

practice in the elegant court of ancient Prussia. And in some European kingdoms they formerly, and at no very distant day either, bound their prisoners on wheels, and broke their bones one by one with heavy iron bars or hammers until death mercifully closed the scene. And I forbear," added she, blushing, "to refer to the tortures of the inquisition; for they are too familiarly known to require recital, and are universally acknowledged to be the very acme of diabolical ingenuity."

The squire gave a nervous jerk upon his knee buckles, but said nothing. As the Indians had now finished their prostrations, Titigaw gave orders to advance. They passed what is now called the Franconia Notch, fording the little Pemigewasset, which takes its rise within the pass of the mountain, and, continuing along by Echo Pond, passed its outlet, which stream forms one of the heads of the Ammonoosuc. They soon came to a high ridge of land now called Bethlehem Heights, whence they had a view of the whole White Mountain chain, or, as the Indians termed them, Agiochook. Continuing on, they next struck another of the sources of the Ammonoosuc, which comes down at this place from old Agiochook; and here Titigaw encamped to await, according to previous agreement, the arrival of Peeroon, whose route obliged him to pass through the great Agiochook Notch, while that of Titigaw had been through the Notch of the Great Sachem of the red men. After waiting nearly a whole day, Peeroon and his band arrived; and greatly rejoiced were the captives to be again permitted to look upon each other's faces, although they were nearly overpowered by hunger and fatigue. The Indians now prepared a miserable meal, of which they partook greedily, and gave a small portion to their captives, who, famished as they were, could eat but sparingly. Soon after the meal was over a council of the Indians was held, in which Taurus endeavored to

mingle; but to all his propositions he only received for answer the gruff "No!" or a surly shake of the head. By their violent gestures and excited air it was evident that some dreadful deed of cruelty was under discussion; and by the fierce and scowling glances shot from the fiery eyeballs of the savages at Captain Grovenor, who had commanded the expedition which resulted in the death of Chocorua, it appeared that he was to be the victim.

The younger Indians now commenced gathering brush and dry wood and placing it beneath one of the large limbs of a tree; while Titigaw, Peeroon, and some others began to paint themselves for the coming deed of awful vengeance. At a word from Titigaw a dozen infuriated savages precipitated themselves upon poor Grovenor and dragged him forward to the fatal pile. So piteous and heartrending were his cries, and so pathetic his prayers for mercy and for life, that it seemed as if even the heart of the bloodthirsty savages must be melted; but so far was this from being the case that they not only turned a deaf ear to his appeals, but laughed at and derided his bitter agonies. And one unacquainted with the history of "man's inhumanity to man" would have been apt to conclude with Squire Langdell that no nation was so cruel and bloodthirsty as these howling savages. In spite of all Grovenor's piteous entreaties, they tied his hands together, and then, passing the rope over the limb of the tree, drew him up directly over the wood prepared to roast their unfortunate victim. As soon as he was at a proper height old Titigaw advanced, and, cutting off his toes, exclaimed, "White dog no shoot big chief any more." Peeroon next stepped forward and said, in reply to the entreaties of poor Grovenor for mercy, "I give white cap'n mercy;" and cut off his nose. The pile was now kindled; and Rozella, whose tender heart was breaking with anguish, begged and entreated that his life

might be spared, and even offered herself as a substitute for him.

The raging flames had now reached their victim ; and, as he screamed with the agonizing torture, a ring was formed around the blazing pile and a grand dance commenced. They yelled, and whooped, and powwowed around the dying man with all the infernal howlings and screechings that savage imaginations could suggest or savage throats execute. Some barked like dogs ; some howled like wolves ; some hooted like owls ; while others imitated every strange and wild noise or note they had ever heard in the pathless forest or upon the lonely mountain. So awful and unearthly were their outcries that the air seemed full of evil and malignant spirits fresh from the pit of woe. The wild beasts, as they snuffed the air laden with the odor of burning human flesh, came rushing down from the mountain sides, uttering their most furious cries, but which were tame and spiritless when contrasted with the infernal din of his savage companion, man.

The mild eyes of the deer, as he gazed from his covert upon the terrible scene, seemed to fill with tears as he drew back with horror and bounded away, congratulating himself, doubtless, that he did not belong to the human species ; and the eagle from his lofty height gazed with fierce and indignant amazement upon the unwonted scene and flew shrieking to his mountain cliff. Still the fiendish orgies went on, some of the savages beating upon the ground, some rolling and tumbling upon the ground in frenzied delight, while others danced in time to the shrieks and groans of the tortured wretch whose piercing cries were sweet to their ears. They kept up their dancing, whooping, and powwowing until the charred and blackened body of poor Grovenor dropped lifeless among the brands and ashes of the fire, when they dispersed to their blankets to dream over their hellish exploit.

The next morning the sun rose as bright and beautiful over the cold remains of the unfortunate Grovenor as though all had been but a feast of fun and frolic. But a cry had gone up from the spot to the throne of the Most High, and a stern voice was heard to reply, "Vengeance is mine: I will repay."

So at least did it seem to the ear of faith of the weary and sorrowing pilgrims of Laconia, as they reflected that, now the arm of man was shortened, they must look to Him who holds all things as in the hollow of his hand. The Indians seemed more excited and irritable than the day previous, and soon hurried their captives rapidly along through the dark and dismal forests. Notwithstanding the sufferings, privations, and the late terrible scene of revengeful cruelty through which the captives had passed, they could not but recur to the sublime scenes of Nature which had lain in their route with peculiar satisfaction. Especially was this the case with the young ladies, who often referred to them with great enthusiasm, and saying how much their pleasure would have been enhanced could they have visited them under more favorable auspices. Rozella and Elsie had given each other a history of their journey since they separated at Red Hill, and most earnestly and eloquently did Elsie dwell upon the surpassing grandeur of the route taken by Peeroon. She described the Notch through which their route laid as being a mountain pass of wonderful sublimity, and, as she thought, not unlike, save in the majesty of its proportions, those in the old countries where in olden time a few brave and determined men had met and repulsed mighty armies.

"O," interrupted Rozella, "how I wish Britton Waldron had been there with his little Spartan band of Mountain Rangers! Wouldn't he have proved another Leonidas at the straits of Thermopylæ and set you all free!"

"The same thought and wish occurred to me," continued

Elsie; "but the time for our deliverance has not yet come."

"But it will come," cried Rozella, "if our lives and theirs are spared and they return safe from Cape Breton."

"My faith, too," replied Elsie, "on that point is strong; and I hope and pray that it may be so."

"And you know," replied Rozella, "that we have learned to have faith in the efficacy of our prayers."

"But, as I was saying," resumed Elsie, "the mountain at this pass is cloven to its very base, and forms a deep and narrow valley, through which the Saco flows from the west to the east side of the mountains, just wide enough (perhaps three rods) to allow the passage of the little river. This mighty chasm extends between two enormous cliffs for a distance of three miles, rising two thousand feet above the path; and in one place it is a mere fissure, only twenty-three feet in width, for it was measured by poor Grovenor."

"How delighted I should be to see it!" exclaimed Rozella.

"But," resumed Elsie, "I have not yet told you of the most picturesque features in the Notch; and I dare say one of the most beautiful objects in the world is the silver cascade which runs, or slides rather, from a height of nearly a thousand feet above the subjacent valley over a smoothly polished rock into the pass below. I say it slides rather than runs; and I use this term because I know of no other which so well expresses its peculiar appearance and motion."

"O that I could see it!" cried Rozella. "But how far from the opening of the chasm is this lovely cascade?"

"Only half a mile," replied Elsie.

"And did you see aught else worthy of note?" inquired Rozella.

"Every thing," answered Elsie, "was worthy of note; but one object which I particularly noticed was a singular

tumulus, or mound of earth, which the Indians called Big Chief's Grave. Some of our party measured it and found it three hundred feet in length, seventy-five in width, and fifty in height. One of the Indians, who spoke English, said that, according to their traditions, it was the burial-place of one of the last of a giant race that had lived in the country ages before it was occupied by the red man."

"They must have been a race of men," said Rozella, "of a stature equalling the loftiest trees and of a prowess infinitely greater than any of the ancient heroes of whom history speaks."

"White squaw too much talk," grunted old Titigaw as he motioned to Peeroon, who approached and separated the young ladies, who did not again meet until they reached the beautiful sheet of water (now called Willoughby Lake) lying between two peaks, which evidently at some remote period had formed but a single mountain. The eastern peak was called Ananance, after a sagamore of the St. Francis tribe who had his lodge upon the mountain. And a more commanding or romantic location could hardly be found. Promontories arise along the crescent-shaped shores of the lake, with little inlets between them; and although it is not over eight miles in length and three in width, yet it is a beautiful and picturesque little lake.

"There is a darling infant lake," cried Rozella, as they came in sight of it, "smiling as it sleeps in the cradle of the mountains."

"It is indeed a delightful offspring," exclaimed Elsie as she came up to where the others had halted to receive orders from Ananance, the great sagamore of the St. Francis Indians.

Titigaw and Peeroon, who had been conferring with Ananance, now returned and announced that the captives were to be taken to the St. Francis tribe, where Frontenac,

the French governor of Canada, would pay over the bounty money for the captives and scalps. They now resumed their march, and passed another beautiful sheet of water, called by the Indians Memphremagog, about thirty-five miles long and from two to ten wide. Proceeding along its shores, they reached and followed down its outlet, called Magog River, which empties into the River St. Francis. They followed the last-named stream but a short distance when they came upon the great Indian settlement of the St. Francis tribes, where, at their approach, the inhabitants, male and female, came out to meet them, and, parading in two long files, received them with great parade and ceremony.

It was in the month of May, and the village of St. Francis exhibited signs that some new scene of excitement was soon to transpire. The time since their captivity had seemed long and tedious to the little band of Laconians, who had been mostly employed at moccason and basket making. But in the interim they had acquired much knowledge respecting the manners and customs of the Indians, and were thereby enabled to tell when any unusual occurrence, either of sport or slaughter, was about to transpire. But, this morning, an observer less skilful than themselves might have seen the unusual excitement in their midst; for the braves were all out with their best wampum, and beads, and eagles' feathers, and arrayed in the apparel only worn on extraordinary occasions. Squire Langdell, who had so far gained upon the good will of the Indians as to be allowed to converse with them, now learned that old Titigaw, Peeroon, and several other warriors had been on an expedition nearly to the neighborhood of Laconia, and, meeting four of the English, who were out on a hunting and fishing excursion upon the River Pemigewasset, had captured two and killed one, while the fourth had made his escape. In consequence of

their bad temper and disappointment induced by the escape of the fourth, and the consequent loss of bounty for his scalp, the Indians were about to compel the remaining two to run the gantlet; and there was little doubt but both would be killed; for the Indians had armed themselves with extra clubs and weapons, and exhibited a vindictive spirit which boded ill to the new prisoners. The squire, having ascertained in what lodge they were confined, asked and obtained permission to visit them, that he might thereby take any message they might wish to send to their friends, and of which he would be the bearer in case he should ever make his escape. At his approach the prisoners came out; and, as the Indians were crowded around them in sufficient numbers to prevent their escape, they were allowed to remain in the open air. Both had been nearly stripped of their clothes preparatory to running the gantlet, that the blows and thrusts of their savage tormentors might the better take effect; and the eldest of the two, who was a middle-aged man, was the very picture of woe and despair. The other, who was a young man, was apparently careless and indifferent. The squire now addressed the eldest and inquired his name.

"Amos Eastman, of Pennacook," answered the unfortunate man.

"I am somewhat acquainted," replied the squire, "in that vicinity, having come from Laconia myself; and should a kind Providence permit me to return home before yourself, what word, if any, shall I convey to your friends?"

Eastman, who read in the tone and manner of the good squire the fate he feared was about to befall himself, replied, —

"If I fall, tell them how, and give them my last and best wishes."

The squire then turned to the young man and asked him if he would give him his name.

"Yes, sir," replied he ; "but I am Stark naked."

"I see you are," returned the squire ; "but what would your name be if you were dressed ?"

"Stark attired," replied the young man.

The squire's dignity was a little touched by this *persiflage* ; and he resumed sharply, "What will it be if the Indians crack your skull ?"

"Stark mad," was the reply.

The now really irritated squire, as he turned upon his heel and was about to leave him, continued : "And what will it be if they beat your foolish brains out ?"

"Stark fool," was the answer, "if I let them, and Stark dead if they succeed."

The honest-minded squire was so taken aback by these replies, the real meaning of which he failed to discern, that he hardly knew what to think of such a hard subject until Eastman informed him that his name was John Stark, of Derryfield, near Amoskeag Falls, where his father resided ; whereupon the squire laughed heartily at the jocular turn given to the matter by the young man, and observed he had heard that his father came across the water from Dumbarton : "And therefore," said he, "you are a Stark Scotchman."

"Not exactly," replied Stark ; "for my mother was a native of the north of Ireland."

"But," resumed the squire, "don't you feel the dreadful ordeal through which you are about to pass ?"

"Not a bit," cried the young man ; "it's nothing but fun for a wild blood like myself."

"But," returned the squire, "they are terribly inhuman and fiendish in their punishments and tortures, as I suppose you are well aware."

"Ay," replied Stark, "as fiendish as devils ; but trust

me to dodge them ; I will show them a trick worth knowing. But I see they are parading for the performances to commence."

The Indians were now arranging themselves in two long parallel lines ; and in their ranks stood Taurus, who had remained in the village ever since the captivity of the Laconians, club in hand, ready and eager to strike down his unfortunate fellow-countrymen.

"I wish," said the squire to Stark, "that gaunt, evil-eyed fellow there was to run the gantlet in your stead ;" and thereupon gave him a short history of the life and character of Taurus.

"He must look sharp," said Stark, "or he will get his head mellowed."

"Truly," said the squire, "I hope he will meet with some accident of that sort ; nothing would give me greater pleasure."

The orders for the prisoners to be brought forward were now given ; and poor Eastman was led to the head of the gantlet, trembling fearfully and as pale as death. The lines were composed of thirty men on a side, facing each other, and armed with heavy clubs of maple and beech. The prisoner was to pass the entire length of the lines at such speed as he chose to adopt ; while each member of the gantlet was at liberty to strike and kill him if he could before he got through. If the prisoner got through alive, and there was enough of life left in him to enable him to survive, he was permitted to live.

The command to start was now given, and Eastman rushed forward with all his speed ; but as he entered the gantlet, Taurus, who was among the first on the lines, struck him a heavy blow and laid him prostrate.

"Blast him !" cried Stark to the squire, as he saw the foul blow. "He'll have somebody to plot for him soon besides that old Dolly of whom you just spoke ; you had better believe that, now."

Eastman quickly rallied, and sprang to his feet, and started again on his way, and was again and again knocked down as often as he arose, until he finally got through the lines, bleeding from head to foot and beaten almost to a jelly, and fell upon the ground apparently lifeless. The savages rested a few minutes, and then orders were given for Stark to approach. He came forward as straight as an Indian himself, with his arms folded upon his breast, and when he reached the head of the lines, dropping his hands upon his hips, he leaped high in air and turned a somerset. As he came down, with his hands still upon his hips, only one foot struck the ground, while the other was thrust between his arm and side, remaining suspended until he struck the ground, when he allowed it to fall. The Indians were much impressed with admiration at this feat, but dared not show him any favor; and word was therefore given for him to start.

As he did so he sprang furiously upon the first Indian and knocked his club from his hand; then, seizing it, he darted behind the second Indian opposite, whom he pushed directly under the falling club of Taurus. The unfortunate savage received the full force of the blow and was felled to the earth; but the next instant his fall was avenged by the terrible blows which were inflicted upon the hard head of Taurus by the friends of the fallen man and by the muscular arm of Stark. Stark now darted along the lines, overturning some, knocking down others, and throwing them all into such disorder that their blows fell oftener upon each other than upon himself. He got through nearly or quite unharmed; and, upon reaching the spot where poor Eastman still lay insensible, he looked back, and there was the whole party engaged in a violent and bloody assault each upon the other. About twenty Indians were lying upon the ground, among whom was Taurus, one of whose "bull's eyes" had been knocked from

its orbit to the earth, and he was finally dragged off, bleeding and senseless ; and from that time Rozella was no more troubled by him, although his skull was too thick to be broken by an Indian's club.

From this day Stark stood high in the estimation of the savages ; but the measure of his fame was not yet full. Not long after, he was set, one day, to hoeing corn ; and he gave them such a specimen of the " improved method " as they did not much approve — going into the work in real gantlet style, first to the right and then to the left, and making a clean sweep of weeds, corn, and every thing else.

The Indians rushed upon him to try his own system on himself ; but Stark cut several of the foremost down with as little ceremony as he had levelled the corn, and told their frightened companions that hoeing corn was fit work for squaws, and not suitable for warriors like himself, who ought to be made a chief. This exploit gave the finishing touch to Stark's greatness in their estimation, and they at once adopted him as a worthy son of their tribe and made him a chief. They arrayed him in their most gaudy and splendid apparel, decorated him with wampum woven with beads and shells and thickly studded with quills and stars of silver, and offered him one of their most worthy women for a mother and a second Pocahontas for a wife, both of which Stark refused in favor of the blooming Molly Page, of Dumbarton, whom he subsequently married.

The sun has set behind the distant peaks of Ananance, whose towering summit is still gilded by its last golden rays, and the shades of an August evening will soon descend upon the picturesque village of St. Francis. The whole western sky is now suffused with blushes, painted by the skilful pencil of the setting sun, whose streaks of carmine tint the colorless cheek of the fleecy clouds. The racing, wrestling, dancing, and other wild sports of an

Indian holiday are still going on as unremittingly as at any time during the day. It is the great wedding day of Ananance, the chief sagamore, who has magnanimously consented to take another wife from the fair daughters of St. Francis, to share with him his lodge upon the commanding mountain which bears his august name. So liberally disposed were the Indians to-day that their great council chamber was thrown open for a meeting of the captives, not only of the village of St. Francis, but of all the adjacent villages. These had now assembled within the lodge in social conclave, guarded, to be sure, but not intruded upon, by the Indians, who stood at proper distances about the council chamber. Here were men and women who had suffered all manner of hardships, and endured wrongs and wretchedness untold and to their descendants unknown. It was indeed a melting scene, and eyes wept and hearts bled afresh. Squire Langdell first addressed the meeting, and gave a history of the capture and sufferings of himself and friends ; and then Rozella arose and sang an appropriate hymn. Others then recounted the perils and dangers through which they had passed, and lamented the small prospect that they would ever be able to effect their escape. Enos Bishop informed them that he was taken from Contoocook and sold to a French gentleman for three hundred livres, which sum must be repaid before he could regain his freedom ; but he had written to the Rev. Jedediah Jewett, of Rowley, Massachusetts, to take a collection in his parish in his behalf, and he hoped ere long to be ransomed. Robert Barber announced that he was taken at the same time with Enos Bishop, and had been sold to a Frenchman about a mile from St. Francis. Samuel Scribner said that he was taken from Bakerstown with the last speaker while mowing in his field. They had carried their guns with them to the field, set them up by the fence, and went about their work.

The Indians crawled through the grass between them and their guns unobserved, and thus cut off their retreat. They were then dragged away, and were treated more roughly than Squire Langdell and his family, and finally sold to a Frenchman in Chambly, about twelve miles distant. He added, with a smile upon his sorrow-stricken countenance, that he was sold, or rather swopped, for a French horse, with a shockingly bad mane and tail at that; whereupon Rozella and Elsie, for the first time since their capture, laughed outright. He closed by saying that he would be extremely happy to get back to Namie Webster, whom he had married but a short time previous to his seizure.

Mrs. Johnson told them she was taken from Number Four, (Charlestown,) and, with her sister and three little children, dragged from their beds with no clothing save what their captors allowed them. She was then driven through the woods and bushes until her feet were torn and lacerated and covered with blood. One of the male captives who was in the same company gave her his own stockings, and then the Indians gave her a pair of moccasins. They then came upon a horse well known to the English by the name of Dobbin, and placed their plunder upon him, and herself atop of that. The ages of her children were respectively six, four, and two years, and that of her sister fourteen. "And," she added, as the tears rolled down her cheeks, "while I have no disposition to reproach the Indians with a want of delicacy, for they kept at a decorous distance, yet none but a mother can appreciate my unhappy position when, in the dark gloom and solitude of the forest, at dead of night, a little daughter was born. After its birth the Indians approached and danced around my humble bed, clapping their hands for joy and crying out, 'Two moneys — two moneys more!' referring to the additional bounty money they would receive. We were afterwards compelled to dance around

the fire in the same ring with the Indians, whose steps we were taught and whose songs we were compelled to learn. A part of one of these songs was as follows :—

‘Dorma witchee notchepung narwis cumpton.’

Whether this task was imposed upon us for their diversion or as a religious ceremony I cannot say.”

The next speaker was Fanny Noble. “At the time of my capture,” said she, “I was so young that I suppose I was not worth selling ; so I was taken by Monsieur Louis St. Auge Charlle, an eminent merchant. I was taught to regard Monsieur and Madame St. Auge as my parents. They caused me to be baptized by the name of Eleanor and educated in the tenets of the Roman Catholic church. I learned the ‘Pater Noster’ and the ‘Ave Maria,’ went to mass, and told my beads with great devotion.”

“Horror!” interrupted Rozella. “Father Ralle and Mogg Hegon were not able to make me do it.”

“Since then,” resumed Fanny, “I have been at a boarding school in Montreal, and have taken lessons in needlework, music, and painting. I have now gained permission to come here to visit my brother, who is attired in Indian costume, and wears at least fifty brooches in his shirt, clasps on his arms, and any quantity of shells and bells about his legs and feet. He often says he would not change his mode of living for any other known to him. And although I am an orphan, and might as well be here as any where so far as parental protection is concerned, yet I long to go back to that little lovely Swan Island, in the Kennebec, where I sported in childhood ; for, if I have no parents to receive me to the fond arms of affection, still I fancy the bright waters that lave that island’s shore would put on their wonted gladsome smile of yore and greet me with an earnest welcome. O, how I miss the

witching morning song of the lark as he mounts into the cloudless sky, trilling his silver melody in sparkling globules from his swelling throat! What are all the tinkling bells of priest or Indian compared to these celestial notes, which ring in thrilling cadence of love from the very gates of heaven? Nor can I ever forget the sweetly sad song of the whippoorwill that used to come and sit upon the rough tombstone of her who was all the world to me, and sing so softly plaintive as the trailing garments of night swept over the misty valley. O, were I but there, how cheerfully would I sleep the sleep of death upon the bosom of her own peaceful dust, could my spirit rise as spotless as her own and blend with it in the perfect unison of immortal love!"

Here the company were greeted by John Stark, who suddenly made his appearance at the door of the lodge arrayed in all the trappings of a chief as he was.

"Not Stark naked to-day, Squire Langdell," cried he as he took off his hat to the squire. "But what the d——I are you all crying about here? Pshaw! I must put a little life into you." So saying, he turned one of his famous somersets, throwing his heels high in the air, and coming down upon his feet with his silver bracelets and bells all ringing and rattling.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said he, "if I had been down in the mouth like this blubbering set of boobies here, I should have had my head driven down between my shoulders long ago. But now you see I'm in regular standing in the lodge; and you must cheer up, for your turns may come next. Mr. Wheelwright, of Boston, has just arrived with the purchase money for this crowned head of mine, which luckily the redskins did not succeed in driving in. But where is that lean hound, the one-eyed Taurus? The loss of that eye was a harder blow than he got from Wenane's stoneheaded arrow. It was nearly a month before he could steer his craft at all straight; and when at

last he did get out of the Great Medicine's lodge, he struck a bee line, or as near one as his one eye permitted, through the woods ; and I warrant you he will not be seen here again before another spring. If he does, just send for me, and I will get his head put through or under another course of sprouts."

By this time the company were laughing instead of crying, and their joy was much enhanced by the news of the departure of Taurus.

"How is Mr. Eastman?" asked Squire Langdell.

"Much better," replied Stark; "although he has had a hard time of it. He will leave with me in the morning. We have both obtained leave from the old French governor to depart, and shall be off as early as possible. So cheer up and look at the bright side of the picture; for your own turns will surely come, and I hope soon." Then, taking them all in turn by the hand, with a hearty shake and a cheerful good by he left the lodge. The meeting now broke up, the captives being conducted to their own lodges under a strong guard; and thus ended the interesting reunion of the English at St. Francis on the last wedding day of the great sagamore Ananance.

"Mercy!" cried Rozella but a week after the above-named meeting. "How much more blood must we be compelled to see run? I was in hopes that the bloody fray at the running of the gantlet by Eastman and Stark would be the last tragic scene we should witness."

"It is heart sickening," replied Elsie; "and I wish we could be allowed to remain even in this loathsome prison to-day, instead of going out as spectators of the coming contest."

"It will be useless to request it," observed the squire; "and we must put the best face on the matter we can; for you remember Stark charged us to keep up our courage

and cheerfulness, and not exhibit our weaknesses to the savages, and we should fare all the better for it. Besides, the fight to-day is between the Indians alone ; and the only feature of it which necessarily concerns us is, that, in case the St. Francis tribe is defeated, we may all be removed, if our lives are spared, to the country of a more distant tribe, where we may not fare as well as we do here, and where our friends may not be able to reach us."

"I think," replied Rozella, "that is a sufficient reason why we should wish the St. Francis tribe may be victorious."

"So do I," cried Elsie ; "for Rozella's friends will be sure to ransom or recapture her when they return from Cape Breton. But it matters but little what becomes of me ; for I have no one to look to for aid and protection, and my future destiny seems dark and dreary. I am sad and lonely ; for, since poor Charles's death, no one cares for me."

And as she pronounced the still loved name poor Elsie burst into a flood of tears and wept and sobbed long and bitterly. Ever since the terrible calamity which had befallen Elsie in the fate of Charles Cutts, her feelings were so tender, and her sensibilities so acute, that, when this subject was touched upon, no attempt was made to offer consolation, as it seemed wholly unavailing. Therefore in the present case, Rozella, to turn the conversation into another channel, asked her father to explain the cause of the quarrel between the Indian tribes and why they fought in such a manner as they were about to do. The squire, who saw her aim, replied that the contest was between the St. Francis Indians and the Adirondaks, a tribe that dwelt upon the St. Lawrence. The quarrel had originated from a dispute concerning the ownership of a portion of land claimed by both tribes. Some of the Adirondaks had settled upon this land, and built wigwams, and

had been attacked and massacred by the St. Francis Indians; and now the whole tribe of the Adirondaks had come on to join issue for the mastery.

"But," asked Rozella, "why do they not make the contest general, as the English do, instead of singling out two individuals to decide the result?"

"Because," said the squire, "Count Frontenac, the governor of Canada, hearing there was likely to be trouble in the states, had sent a large force of French and Indians to Schenectady and Saratoga, in which force were comprised most of the bravest warriors of the St. Francis tribe. But the cunning dogs have managed to keep this fact concealed from the Adirondaks, lest the latter should take advantage of their weakness; and Peeroon, under whose command the tribe is left in the absence of old Titigaw, proposed to settle the quarrel by a single hand-to-hand fight, and whichever side was conquered in the person of its representative should yield all further claim to the possession of the disputed territory."

"But," said Rozella, "it is absurd and foolish thus to quarrel about a strip of wild and uncultivated land."

"The wilder the land," replied the squire, "the better for the Indian; and the manner of settling the dispute is an old one among them."

The guard now entered and bade the captives follow him to the great battle ground, and informed them that the Apenaquis had arrived from the Three Rivers to see that both sides had fair play; and as the contest was about to commence they must make haste, so as to be there in time for its opening. As it was nearly two miles to the spot, the captives were obliged to walk at the top of their speed; and, as they were hurrying forward, Rozella asked of the guard the object of their being taken to witness the fight. The Indian answered that it was that the English might see what big warriors the Indians were, and that their

hearts might be struck with terror at the thought that their turn to die might come soon.

"We know," replied Elsie, "how well they can fight, and our hearts are already brimful of terror."

"Ugh!" grunted the savage. "Palefaces' hearts hold some more terror yet."

When they reached the battle field they found the St. Francis Indians and Apenaquis drawn up in one line and the Adirondaks on another, facing each other, and covered from head to foot with the habiliments of war, while the hideously painted faces indicated but too plainly their raging thirst for each other's blood. The Adirondaks had selected for their champion their great chief and leader, Wampatuck, who was to contest the issue with the renowned Peeroon of the St. Francis tribe. They were to fight until one or the other was slain, first upon horseback and with lances; when, if neither fell, they were next to continue the contest on foot and with tomahawk; and, if these failed to decide the issue, resort was to be had to knives. The horses were now led forward bridled, and with a bearskin firmly fastened upon their backs, and each was stationed about ten paces in front of the battle line to which he belonged. The two chiefs then marched out, each in front of his own line of warriors, and, turning, addressed his followers to the effect that, in case he should fall, they should fulfil the stipulated agreement to the letter, make suitable disposal of his remains, and, in case of another war between the now contending parties, fail not to avenge his death. Each wore only a girdle of wampum around his loins, to which was attached a flounce, or border, reaching nearly to the knee, while in the girdle was placed a bright tomahawk and a long, keen knife. At a given signal both sprang upon their horses, and the long war lance of each was passed to his hands. The next moment they rushed towards each other with the utmost

fury, their eyes glowing with intensest hate and their hideous faces distorted with a thousand emotions of savage and deadly hostility. Each reined his horse as near the other as he dared, and, when nearly opposite, made a powerful thrust with his lance. Both missed ; for, as each aimed the blow, the other threw himself as quick as thought over the opposite side of his horse, retaining his hold by one foot and hand only, while the lance passed harmlessly above him. They instantly wheeled their steeds, which had run nearly to the opposite line, and again rushed to the encounter. Both struck as before, and both attempted the same manœuvre for the avoidance of the blow, but not with equal success ; for the lance of Wampatuck came with tremendous violence against the side of Peeroon, who was a moment too late in slipping over his horse's side, and bore him to the ground. At this first "palpable hit" of their chief the Adirondaks set up a furious howl of joy ; but Peeroon nothing daunted, sprang to his feet, leaped lightly upon his horse, and, rushing again at his adversary, threw his lance with such resistless force that it passed nearly through and broke short off in the body of Wampatuck's horse, which immediately fell dead. It was now the turn of the St. Francis tribe to shout and whoop, which they did most ferociously.

Each now grasped his tomahawk and advanced on foot to within a few paces of the other, and, pausing for a moment to exchange mutual glances of burning hate and malice, leaped like a tiger upon his adversary. Their weapons only met and clashed together, and the fiery sparks which flew from their sharp edges was the only result. Neither dare withdraw his weapon from the fearful union, lest disunion should bring about a result more fatal still, until they had remained in the attitude assumed at their closing in for nearly a minute ; when, as if by mutual consent, each drew back, and, after a moment's pause, again sprang upon his

foe. The hatchet of Wampatuck struck the side of Peeroon, but in such a way as to glance upon a rib and only inflict a flesh wound ; while the weapon of Peeroon cleft the cheek of Wampatuck from the ear to the mouth. Both now bounded back, and, after another frightful glare at each other, again rushed to the conflict. As they came together, both struck with all the fury of desperation ; but the keen edge of Wampatuck's axe descended in full power upon the handle of Peeroon's tomahawk and severed it completely in twain. They immediately drew their knives ; and now came the final struggle. It was now "diamond cut diamond," for whichever lost his knife lost his life, and there was no further mercy or favor to be shown by either. As they darted upon each other, the horrible cry which burst from their lips, and which was rather extorted by the inevitable certainty of approaching death than by the pangs of bodily pain, rang over the field and fell with startling effect upon the ears of the terror-stricken spectators. As they struck, both fended off the blows and thrusts with the left arm, and the arm of Wampatuck was cut to the bone ; while the tendons of Peeroon's wrist were severed, and his hand dropped powerless upon his arm. At the next plunge Peeroon's ear fell to the ground ; but his long knife had pierced the shoulder of Wampatuck, whose right arm dropped useless by his side, and his weapon fell to the ground. He sprang forward to catch it with his left hand, but was met by the bloody blade of Peeroon, which was driven to the hilt in his heart, and he fell dead upon the ground. So exhausted was Peeroon by fatigue and loss of blood, that, giving his knife a victorious whirl in the air, he too sank upon the ground ; while long and loud rang the rejoicing shouts of the St. Francis tribe, as they yelled, whooped, danced, and rolled upon the earth in a perfect frenzy of delight.

But the defeated Adirondaks hung their heads with shame and grief; for not only had they lost their land, but their great chief and mighty warrior, the brave Wampatuck, had fallen. They sprang forward to bear off the lifeless body of their beloved chief; but Peeroon seeing their design, and being aware that if he failed to secure his adversary's scalp he would be considered as having achieved only half a victory, dragged himself to the body, and, as his left hand was useless, seized the long scalp lock of the fallen chief in his teeth, and, passing his keen knife around his head, stripped the scalp from the skull ere they could reach the spot. Both chiefs were now borne from the field — the one alive and in the flush of "glorious victory," the other dead and in shame and disgrace.

Squire Langdell and Mr. Tufton now looked around for Rozella and Elsie, whom they supposed to be standing just behind them; but both had fainted and were lying upon the ground, while the younger Tufton girls were supporting their heads. They sprang to their assistance, and Owega procured some water for them; but they were too feeble to leave the ground until after the Indians had retired, and then were obliged to be supported to the lodge. Elsie passed a restless and feverish night, and her situation was rendered doubly critical by the unceasing whoopings and howlings kept up all night by the Indians in consequence of their victory over the Adirondaks; in addition to which, and while the rejoicings were at their height, old Titigaw and his warriors returned with a hundred scalps of the English soldiers slaughtered after the surrender by that imbecile old officer, Colonel Munroe, of Fort William Henry to the faithless Montcalm, who commanded the French and Indians on that occasion. Munroe's weakness consisted in surrendering the fort at all, and Montcalm's perfidy in disregarding every honorable

principle or usage of war, and suffering the Indians to rob, slaughter, and scalp the English soldiers after they had thrown down their arms, which they had done in consequence of receiving his solemn pledge and word of honor that they should be protected.

When the scalps were brought in, the savages, already excited to the highest pitch, became so perfectly frantic with exultation and joy that they could not remain in their wigwams, but came out into the open air and rolled and tumbled upon the ground, crying out, "Too much joy! Two victories for Indian in one day!"

They then built bonfires all around the village, and, procuring poles, stuck the scalps of the murdered English, together with that of Wampatuck, upon them, and raised them aloft with their bloody locks streaming in the night air. As the noise and confusion began to approach the lodge where the captives were confined, Squire Langdell observed, "We shall have trouble to-night; for these wolves have got a taste of blood, and they will not be satisfied until our own runs."

Elsie groaned in agony as the squire spoke; and her father exclaimed, "Alas! alas! they are even now howling at our very door!"

"Cheer up, my good friends," cried the darkeyed Owega; "it is a quarrel among themselves."

And so it proved; for the savages soon turned; and that night the little band of Laconian captives, for the first time since they left their dear homes, slept unwatched and unguarded.

What remained of the night after they retired to their humble beds was passed by the wearied captives in quiet repose; and even Elsie dropped into a calm and tranquil sleep, from which she awoke the following morning much refreshed and decidedly better.

After breakfast, one of the young squaws, to whom in a

previous sickness Rozella had shown much kindness, now entered the lodge and gave all the young ladies an invitation to go boat riding and fishing with a little company of young squaws. Rozella declined at first on account of her friend's indisposition; but upon Elsie's entreating her to go, and Mrs. Langdell's assuring her that she would take good care of Elsie, she finally consented to go. The party consisted of about thirty young squaws, full of life and animation, all of whose forms were elegant and elastic, and whose features for the most part were regular, and even beautiful. These, with Rozella, Agnes and Alfia Tufton, and Owega, constituted the entire party, which now proceeded down the banks of the River St. Francis, where were plenty of birch bark canoes ready for use. There were other Indians upon the shore as well as upon the river, both men and women; though no one interfered with their party, or even noticed them, but kept intent upon their own affairs. The young Englishwomen were somewhat timid as they entered the frail bark; but Owega seemed perfectly at home and was delighted beyond measure.

Three of the young women stepped into each of the canoes; and most dexterous oarswomen too, in the opinion of Rozella. They sat in the bottom of the canoe; and, as the little oars dipped into the water, the light bark shot from the shore and skimmed over the waves like a sea bird. A swift and exciting race now commenced; and the speed of the rival boats seemed to the Englishwomen, who were unused to such exhibitions, to be frightful and the danger imminent. The boats wheeled at times in such short circles that they ran upon their very sides; when, just as they were about to dip into the waves, a sudden though slight motion of the oars would bring them up again, and they would shoot over the water, hardly seeming to touch its surface. Next came what they

called the ladies' circle race, which commenced by one boat describing a large circle upon the water, while at equal distances the others followed.

After they had gone around a certain number of times with astonishing velocity, the foremost canoe then wheeled to the outside of the circle, bringing the second upon her right, and the next in order upon her left; which movement was imitated by the other boats in turn, until half of them were going in one direction and half in the other. Rozella and her companions expected every moment that their canoe would be run into and sunk by its *vis-à-vis*; but, though the boats were shot over the water within an inch or two of each other, not a single collision occurred, so skilfully were they managed by their "dark but comely" oarswomen.

Fishing came next in order; and the slender barbed lance was thrown with so unerring an aim as to excite the admiration of the English ladies, who had never before witnessed this novel mode of pursuing "the gentle craft." After a sufficient supply of fish was obtained, the order was given by a young squaw, who seemed to be tacitly acknowledged as their leader, that the boats should be arranged for what Rozella named "the dance of the water nymphs." The canoes were now wheeled into positions somewhat like the sets of a cotillon upon the watery floor; and, as all the squaws commenced singing in tune, most wildly but enchantingly, did the musical notes roll over the silent water. The boats opposite each other commenced a sort of rocking dance, wheeling from the set and circling around the outside; then, spinning back to their places, crossed over and back again; which change was imitated in turn by the others, until the last couple swung round into place, when all the boats described a circle, following each other in rapid succession for a certain number of times; and then each canoe whirling around

its companion, all swung to their places, and the dance was finished. They next brought the bows of the boats so closely together that they might all have been covered by a large plate, while the sterns shot out like the spokes of a wheel. What the next evolution would have been does not appear, for at the moment of their becoming stationary their attention was diverted by loud shouts from the shore, and, looking in that direction, they saw that a party of Indians who had gone on a hunting excursion that morning had driven a large buck into the river, which was now swimming directly towards them. The squaws wheeled their boats, and, swift as so many Indian arrows, darted to the chase. The buck turned down the river and exerted all his strength to make his escape, but was soon passed by the squaws, and compelled to shape his course for the shore, where the hunters stood ready to receive him. He had met so numerous an array of fair though formidable foes upon the river, and been so hard pressed by them, that he seemed, under the pressure of this new danger, to have forgotten his former enemies; nor did he regain his presence of *mind* until he came to within about a dozen rods of the shore, when he caught sight of his former pursuers and again wheeled and faced the boats. As he did so he received a shower of blows upon his head from the light paddles of the squaws; but, nothing daunted, he struck at the foremost canoe with his powerful fore feet, which was stove in by the force of the blow, and immediately filled. But the boat being filled with squaws who could all swim nearly as well as himself no alarm or confusion was caused by the accident; and, as he came on, he was again met by the second canoe with such rapid and energetic blows, that, what with the blows, and the screams, and shouts from the entire party, he was forced to make for the shore, where he was soon despatched. The squaws who had been thrown into the

water refused to be taken into the other boats, for fear they, too, might be upset, and so swam after the canoes of their companions to the shore. After resting themselves a few minutes, they reëntered their canoes and started for the village, all highly delighted with the day's sports. Rozella and the Tufton girls were so fascinated with what they had seen and by the kindness with which they had been treated that they were almost in love with Indian life; and Owega seemed almost crazy with delight. But when they came in sight of the village, and saw the scalps of the English soldiers still hanging upon the poles around the wigwams, they for the first time during the day felt themselves among their enemies and realized that they were prisoners.

When Rozella returned to her own lodge she found Elsie much better, and eager, together with the other captives, to hear a recital of the day's sport. After this was detailed, a portion of the fish which had been taken and had been generously presented them by the young squaws was cooked, and the evening was passed quite pleasantly in discussions of the Indian character, and particularly whether it was possible for him to be civilized and lose that terrible thirst for blood which seemed one of the very instincts of his nature.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ROUTE OF THE MOUNTAIN RANGERS. — CONVERSATION AMONG THE OFFICERS. — GHOST STORY BY ENGLISH. — PROCEEDINGS AFTER THE BATTLE OF TICONDEROGA.

BUT September has come with its clouds and storms, and the green leaves are beginning to lose their summer bloom, and to turn pale with fear or red with anger at his approach.

The Mountain Rangers of Laconia had scarcely lost sight of the Buck's Horn Inn ere Captain Waldron gave the order for the music to cease ; and the shrill notes of the fife and the quick rat-tat-tat of the drum were only heard in the wild echoes that rung back from the distant hillside and died away in faint whispers in the grassy vale below. Orders were then given for an irregular march ; and, as the sections broke up, each soldier picked his way along the muddy road as best he might and selected such companions as he chose. Lieutenant Gridley hurried from the rear and overtook Ensign Walcott, and both increased their pace until they came up with Captain Waldron, when a brisk conversation commenced upon the prospects of the approaching struggle and the nature of the assistance they were to receive from the English army.

"I really hope," said Waldron, "that Amherst will do better service than Commodore Warren did at Cape

Breton, or we might as well be without his command and counsel."

"I hope so," said Gridley; "for it seems to me it is quite enough for the inferior officers and soldiers to do the fighting, without having to lay the plans for the attack, and especially to be obliged to alter, in the very heat of the battle, the whole arrangement of the half-digested scheme, as we did at Cape Breton."

"I tell you what it is, boys — ah, excuse me, gentlemen officers," said Walcott, touching the rim of his hat and twisting up the corners of his eyes, "we have got a great deal of hard fighting before us; but, then, by the planets in which Ludeman, the learned astrologer of Holland, read our future destiny, we have victory and glory before us; and there are other objects worth fighting for which the astrologer knew not of."

"True," replied Waldron; "and, if we are so fortunate as to gain these objects, I rather think we shall not give them up so readily as the ministers of the crown did the hard-won fortress of Louisburg at the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle."

"Yes, yes, gentlemen," answered Gridley; "you have got something to fight, and fight for, now, besides fogs."

"Yes, ghosts," replied Walcott, as they all laughed at the recollection of the remark of Comical Plump, that two of the officers were in love with ghosts and one with a shadow; "so it seems yours are but 'foggy subjects,' after all."

And they again broke out into laughter, in which George English, who just then rode up, joined with a good grace and a hearty will.

"And what about this shadowy lady?" asked English, as he dismounted to give Captain Waldron a chance to ride, and grasping the arm of Gridley as he spoke.

"She was a mysterious lady," replied Gridley, "whom

we saw at the house of Squire Langdell on the night of our return from the war. We at first thought her an apprentice of old Dolly Plot ; and, though we could not but be struck with her wonderful beauty, no particular attention was paid to her ; but we subsequently ascertained that she had no connection with the other inmates of the house, but had applied to old Dolly, as a stranger, for a night's lodging, and was in all probability as pure and innocent as she was beautiful and attractive. While engaged in enlisting our soldiers for this expedition we made diligent search for her, but to no purpose ; nor has she since been heard of."

"It is indeed mysterious," rejoined English.

"Yes," replied Gridley ; "and I have hunted through all the vacant houses in the settlement from garret to cellar, searched the woods and the mountains for miles, and made inquiries in all the adjacent towns, but can obtain no trace of her."

"Well, let her go," said English. "Who cares for any one woman, Mr. Gridley, if she is handsome?"

The lieutenant stopped short, and, looking English full in the face, and at the same time disengaging his arm, repeated, —

"Let her go, Mr. English ? Who cares for any one woman ? Mr. English, my name, sir, is Grizzly Gridley — Lieutenant Grizzly Gridley, sir, at your service. I am grizzly in name as well as in hair and beard ; and perhaps a young lady so refined and cultivated as she whom I seek must be might not accept me for a husband ; but, sir, I wish you to understand that Grizzly Gridley would not only fight fogs and ghosts to win her, but grizzly bears, sir, could he only hear her say, 'The mystery is solved, and I am thine, and thine only.' When, sir, you came to our place of rendezvous this morning you were welcomed with earnest and sincere cordiality, not only for the wel-

come news you brought us, but for your gallant bearing and prepossessing appearance ; and you offered your services as a volunteer to our band, and was warmly received as a desirable acquisition to our ranks ; but, sir," continued Gridley, throwing his head back and fixing a stern look upon English, "I would have you understand that you must not, in my presence, speak disrespectfully of this mysterious lady, or shadowy lady as you are pleased to term her, nor use in reference to her any such loose language as 'Let her go — who cares for any one woman ?' "

"I beg a thousand pardons, lieutenant," replied English. "I certainly meant no disrespect to the lady."

"Very well," answered the lieutenant ; "I accept your apology, and presume we shall have no more trouble about the matter."

And they both started along to overtake the other soldiers, who had all passed them.

"I wish," said English, "you would give me a description of the young lady of whom we have been speaking, if you do not consider my request too presumptuous."

"I would do so with pleasure," replied Gridley, "if it were in my power ; but you might as well ask me to describe a sunbeam. Her eyes were never matched by any I ever saw in the head of a human being, and in color were not unlike your own, but of ineffable lustre, and seemingly of an unfathomable depth of tenderness and expression ; and in her cheeks the rose and lily blended in such exquisite tints as no pencil save that of Nature ever yet combined. She was dressed in a long travelling habit over an under skirt, which hung loose from her polished shoulders ; for, in her haste to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, she had not stopped to fasten it ; and she held in her hand a little silver candlestick, in which was a lighted wax candle ; and even that little candlestick,

strange as it may seem, is nowhere to be found, nor is any other trace of her visible, and not even the bed in the room she occupied seemed to have been disturbed."

"A ghost! a ghost! lieutenant," cried English; "and Comical Plump might have said three ghosts instead of two."

"I thought it might possibly be one myself," replied Gridley, "and divulged my suspicions to one Dolly Plot, whom we drove from the squire's house at the time, and who was supposed to be intimate with ghosts; but when I paid her liberally to tell me all she knew in relation to her, she said that she was no ghost, for she had taken her by the hand, and a softer, warmer hand, and a more exquisitely moulded arm, she never laid eyes on."

"Mysterious indeed!" repeated English.

"Indeed it is," replied the lieutenant.

Captain Waldron, who during the above conversation had been riding in front of the Rangers, now halted till the others came up, for the purpose of giving up his horse to its owner, who thereupon very politely tendered the use of it to Gridley. Gridley very politely accepted the offer, and, as he mounted, remarked to English that his portmanteau was so large he would advise that it be placed in the baggage wagon in the rear. But English objected, saying that his horse was well able to carry it; that the wagon was already sufficiently loaded; and, besides, he might wish to take his horse much farther than they would proceed with the wagon. So Gridley rode ahead; and Captain Waldron and George English took up the same topic of conversation which was so lately discussed by the latter and Gridley.

"The lieutenant thinks her extremely handsome," observed English, after a few preliminary remarks relative to the mysterious lady.

"And so, indeed, she was," replied Waldron; "and I

think she was the most beautiful woman, save one, I ever saw."

"And who may the exception be?" asked English.

"The lovely Queen of the Forest," answered Waldron.

"And what is her name?" pursued English.

"Rozella Langdell, to be sure," answered Waldron, "for whose liberation and that of her affectionate parents we have enlisted. And although the people of the settlements may think the love of country the chief motive of our enterprise, I am decidedly of the opinion that we love our 'queen' better than we do our country. And if Heaven smiles upon our expedition, we shall not come back until she is released from the jaws of the red wolves (if indeed she be still alive, which may Heaven grant) and returns with us."

"May Heaven smile, then," cried English, warmly; "for I should be glad to witness the happy meeting between two long-separated hearts which are in reality but one."

"If such be your wish," cried the captain, "you will have to station yourself in the front ranks where the battle fire blazes hottest."

"And I shall be there," replied English, "if I am not shot down before I reach that position. But it seems to me that the lovely land of Laconia, as you call it, abounds in beautiful ladies, if all the officers are as deeply enamoured as yourself."

"But," responded Waldron, "neither Laconia nor any other land has a daughter so fair, so pure, or so angelic as Rozella Langdell."

"It is rarely the case," observed English, "that sterling goodness of heart underlies so beautiful and perfect an exterior as is represented to be possessed by the lady in question."

"True," returned Waldron, "and, therefore, when we do find an angel heart enveloped in an angel form, it is worth

fighting for, and, if needs be, dying for. And I am ready and willing to do either or both for Rozella, in whom purity of heart and symmetry of form are so intimately blended as to form a perfect specimen of womanhood."

At this stage of the conversation they were joined by Ensign Walcott, who, overhearing the last few sentences of their discourse, informed English that he had not heard all the charms and graces set forth which once adorned the fair land of Laconia; for although he did not claim for Elsie Tufton all the beauty, purity, and grace there were in the whole world, yet no more faithful heart ever beat in a true woman's breast, in Laconia or out of it, than in her own. And although he would agree with Captain Waldron in all that he could possibly say in regard to the angelic purity and loveliness of Rozella, and with Grizzly Gridley in the marvellous beauty and untarnished innocence of his mysterious ideal, yet for his part he would not exchange the affectionate and truehearted Elsie for both. "And," continued he, "as Captain Waldron has pledged himself to deliver Rozella or perish in the attempt, I also pledge myself to rescue Elsie or die at her feet. Should I succeed, I shall plead my cause before her and tell her all I have dared and suffered in her behalf; and, if I should be so unfortunate as to have my suit refused, never again shall I set foot in the loved and lovely Laconia."

The conversation then turned upon the prospects of a victory under the leadership of Amherst, the new settlements which were being made, and the future prospects of the country. As the company approached the new settlements, the inhabitants brought out all they had in their houses for them to eat, and especially, as was the custom of those days, all they could raise that was considered good to drink. The soldiers did not fail to do justice to these "creature comforts," and when night overtook them upon the banks of the Merrimac they were as jolly a set

of soldiers as ever buckled on a knapsack or shouldered a gun. The tents were now pitched for the night, the camp fires lighted, and the supper despatched ; after which, the jovial crew, being chock full of patriotism and prowess, love and liquor, began to sing songs and tell stories of the most inspiring and marvellous character. Each sung a song or told a story until it came to the turn of English, who at first declined ; but upon being assured that all the company, both men and officers, were expected to do one or the other, he finally consented.

"I will relate," said he, "a short story of the ghosts of Benefice Castle."

"O," shouted the whole company, "a ghost story here in the wild woods, around the camp fires, would be just the thing."

"The ghosts of Benefice Castle," observed Captain Waldron ; "we want the old castle to make it go down smooth. Mr. Marine Lee could tell us that."

"Yes," said Gridley, "we want one that will tell on the imagination ; and, as Mr. English has not heard the story of the Phantom Ship, we will ask Marine Lee to repeat that afterwards."

"Certainly," replied Lee ; and Mr. English commenced his story.

"Benefice Castle, so called from the numerous benefits conferred by its former occupant and owner upon all in its vicinity or who sought shelter beneath its hospitable roof, was situated near a small river, not many leagues from the sea shore, in one of the eastern counties of England. It was built of wood, and was reckoned, according to the taste of that day, a very creditable specimen of the then prevailing style of architecture. It stood upon a commanding and delightful site, surrounded by gardens and orchards ; while around it stretched the broad lands of its owner, watered by rippling brooks and shaded by

tall and stately trees. One night, late in autumn, loud shrieks and wailing cries of terror and despair were heard issuing from its precincts; but no one dared approach until the following morning, when it was found empty and deserted. Every living soul had disappeared; but whether they had been slain by murderous assassins and their bodies secreted, or spirited away by foul and malignant spirits, it was impossible to tell. The castle was searched from top to bottom, and the cellar thoroughly and minutely scrutinized, to ascertain if their remains had been concealed or buried therein; but no stone of the walls seemed to have been displaced, and the gravelly bottom had been evidently undisturbed for years. After this event, the castle, as well as every thing about it, soon fell into ruinous decay, and was shunned by those even who once delighted to assemble within its hospitable walls. Strange and unearthly noises were heard at night, echoing through its spacious chambers, and peals of wild and maniac laughter rang out upon the still air; while fierce animals and all manner of unclean birds and reptiles seemed to throng its open portals. It so happened that a party of soldiers not unlike ourselves, who were returning to their homes from distant and hard-fought battle fields, reached the castle just after nightfall, and, being wearied and fatigued by their long march, resolved, in spite of ghosts, to enter and pass the night. As they turned to the chief entrance a brilliant light gleamed from the windows, and merry voices were heard within, which fell upon their entranced ears like the very harmonies of love. They did not hesitate long, but courageously struck upon the great hall door, which instantly, and as if of its own accord, flew wide open, and beings, as they seemed to their enraptured gaze, of the most transcendent loveliness tripped out to meet and welcome them. Though, as yet, all was darkness within,—for at their entrance the lights all disap-

peared, — yet the transported soldiers, finding themselves in the warm and friendly embrace of beings who seemed any thing but ghosts, were so completely enraptured by their cordial welcomes and thrilling caresses as to lay aside all caution or reserve ; and, pressing them to their panting bosoms, they took long draughts of intoxicating smiles from their ruby lips ; assured them that, of all created beings, they were the most beautiful ; and pledged them their unceasing love and everlasting fidelity. While the soldiers were yet upon their bended knees, pledging and receiving pledges of never-ending devotion, and the very atmosphere around seemed redolent of love, all at once an angel of light seemed to descend from above, bearing aloft a brilliant wand of fire, whose radiance seemed to illumine the castle with all the splendor of the bright orb of day. She appeared to the astonished eyes of the soldiers to be a thousand times more beautiful than any human being they had ever seen or dreamed of.

“ At her advent, the lovely creatures who had been so warmly saluted by their soldier lovers suddenly disappeared, and foul and frightful spectres of hideous form and repulsive mien as suddenly took their places. So awfully terrible and repulsive was their appearance that the brave soldiers, who had walked undaunted through seas of blood and looked calmly upon vast fields of ghastly corpses, now quailed before these loathsome creatures, and staggered back from their embrace in mingled horror and disgust. At this the grim spectres seemed enraged beyond measure, and the soldiers fancied they could see glowing sparks of fire leaping from their fingers' ends ; and anon they took the shape of old creatures, whose fiery faces burned with wrath from beneath their monstrous caps as they grinned and chattered at their affrighted guests. Lurid flames of fire darted from their mouths, while their eyes glared with fury, and their long fangs gnashed to-

gether like the jaws of a tiger. Huge giants of enormous height strode through the castle, and deformed and uncouth monsters with two faces scowled malignantly upon them, seemingly intoxicated, not only with rage and fury, but with that infernal draught prepared from the coiling folds of the snaky 'worm of the still.' The soldiers now summoned up all their resolution, and, drawing their swords, rushed to the conflict. As they saw the flash of the gleaming steel cutting the air in wavy circles, the spectral crew bounded back, and, amid the crash of falling chairs, tables, and doors, swept from the haunted castle with screams more deafening than a chorus of a thousand furies, and disappeared in the surrounding darkness. The soldiers, awed and terror stricken at the thought of having been engaged in such a contest with the 'powers of darkness,' now staggered from the castle, weak and trembling, and sought refuge in the neighboring houses. But scarcely would they close their eyes when the images of their infernal foes seemed to rise before them, peering with diabolical malice into their faces and hissing words of horrid anathemas into their unwilling ears until they cried out in extreme terror and groaned aloud in utter agony. But, ere long, these unwelcome visitants vanished, and the graceful forms of the beautiful beings they had first seen came before them in all their transcendent loveliness. Thus the night passed ; and the next morning the soldiers soon rid themselves of the spell cast around them by the evil spirits ; but the enchantment of those they had first met was not so easily shaken off. Half beside themselves with the frenzy of their passion, they conferred together to devise ways and means of finding the lost loveliness and perfection they so much admired ; and, while in grand conclave, an oddly-shaped, rusty little key, small yet strong, came tumbling among them. A ghostly key it must have been ; for it raised itself upright and said in a strange but firm

tone, 'I can unlock the mystery which so perplexes you, and bring your fairy idols to you, or conduct you to them.' The soldiers only sneered at the little rusty key, and kicked it from their midst in utter disdain. At this unkind repulse of its proffered services, the little key, seemingly more crooked than before, replied in a sad voice, 'Although my body is short, my back crooked, and my shoulders somewhat deformed, yet I can turn as large a bolt as longer and more elegantly-shaped keys, and have half a mind to turn a double one against yourselves ; yet, for the sake of those you seek and whose humble servant I am, I'll disregard this insult ; and I have no doubt but that, rusty and odd as I look, I shall reach their presence, where you will beg of me to admit you.'

"Gentlemen," continued English, "my ghost story is finished ; but it, too, has a key to its mysteries, which, if Fortune smiles upon the gallant Mountain Rangers of Laconia, I will in due time present you."

"Don't, for mercy's sake, ever speak of it again," groaned a dozen voices ; and as English turned to observe what effect his story had produced upon the soldiers, what was his surprise to find the few that had sufficient courage to hear its conclusion all staring at him in utter astonishment and dismay, as if he himself were a veritable ghost, or a conjurer at the very least. Lieutenant Gridley was crouching in a fir tree ; Captain Waldron and about a dozen others had crawled into one of the baggage wagons ; and nothing was visible of them save their boots, as they protruded from its rear ; while Coffin and Marine Lee were cowering behind a large tree and shaking as if in an ague fit.

"Now," cried English, pretending not to notice the panic his story had occasioned, "where is Mr. Lee ? I wish to hear about the Phantom Ship."

"No, no," cried the captain, as he added, "I forbid the telling of any more ghost stories during the remainder of our campaign."

"Now," said Gridley, "I move we take another stiff horn, to keep them off."

This was agreed to, *nem. con.*; so the soldiers all drank a brimming cup, to keep their courage up and the ghost down. But although they took more than their accustomed allowance, in order that they might sleep the more soundly, yet the effect produced was, as we shall soon see, quite different from that anticipated. All then, save four men, who were posted as sentries, retired to their blankets, and soon all was still. Ere long the loud "who" of an owl resounded from the branches of a tree above their heads.

"Not I — not I," responded the snoring soldiers.

"Keep him off, sentinel, for mercy's sake!" groaned Walcott.

"The beautiful ghost — the mysterious lady; let her in!" cried Gridley.

"No! no!" shouted Walcott; "don't you do it."

But the report of the soldier's gun which brought the owl down brought also the soldiers up upon their feet awake again.

George English alone of the whole company seemed to have slept soundly; but the others, among whom was even Marine Lee, who was familiar with ghost stories, declared they had not slept a wink, and attributed this result to the ghost story of George English, which they said had so much mystery about it that they could not shake it off, but could still feel it in their very bones.

"I say, captain," exclaimed Wiley Walcott, while English still slept, and after the effects of the night's carousal had passed off, "this George English is rather a queer soldier — eh?"

"Yes," replied the captain, "there are some queer points about him; but he is so choice in his use of words,

and has so clear and acute a mind withal, that he must be ranked as a decidedly superior man."

"And," remarked Walcott, "he must have been in the field before. He is brave too ; for he seems more anxious to get to the scene of action than any of us ; but his ambition is not inordinate ; for when we offered to give up our commissions in his favor he courteously but firmly refused our offers. Being a stranger here, and having neither land nor love to fight for, he has chosen the Mountain Rangers for his companions in arms in preference to the king's regular forces, who were trained under the brave Amherst, which is enough in itself to entitle him to our regard."

"And one other little item," said Gridley, as he joined the group, "is, that he is the handsomest man I ever saw in this country or any other."

"Certainly," replied Waldron ; "that is acknowledged on all hands."

"And now," resumed Gridley, "I will tell you another thing ; and that is in relation to my fears on this point."

"Aha!" cried Waldron, with a sudden start ; "I can read them."

"And so can I," added Walcott ; "but go on."

"That was one reason why I talked to him so impudently when, referring to the mysterious lady, he said, 'Let her go—who cares for any one woman?' I intended to make him angry, in the hope that, in that event, he would leave us, and thus we should get rid of him ; but he apologized so frankly and in such a gentlemanly way that my lance was broken, and I gave up the idea of further contention. My reason for wishing to get rid of him was this : I feared that, in case we were successful in recapturing Rozella and Elsie, and they got but one glance of that finely-chiselled face and elegant form, it would be a hopeless case for one of you."

"It is the same thing I had supposed," replied Waldron, thoughtfully, "and about which I have been troubled ever since we started."

"My case precisely," groaned the ensign; "but, though I will risk all the harm he can do in the captain's case, since the bargain is made and published to the world, yet when I think, Gridley, of my danger, I tremble for the result."

"I don't know about the propriety of excepting the captain's case," returned Gridley; "for if Rozella should happen to give the captain the slip in this case, I don't know as I should blame her much; for, if I were a lady, I should certainly prefer George English to any other man I ever saw."

"But," said Captain Waldron, "we must not be too suspicious of Mr. English; for it may be he is already betrothed to some fair lady as handsome and winning as himself."

"If such be the case," replied Walcott, "we can easily detect it; or, at any rate, it will be no very hazardous matter to make the attempt, which we will do as soon as we have a convenient opportunity."

But fighting soon put an end to jealousy.

But four days after the above conversation the Mountain Rangers, with full ranks and in high spirits, marched into Number Four (Charlestown) to the merry music of the fife and drum. They were received with great parade and ceremony by Colonel Lovewell, who was then commander of the New Hampshire forces. His army consisted of a thousand soldiers, all hale and hearty men, and able and willing to do good service in the cause of their king and country. His men had just risen from their breakfast, and were immediately paraded to receive the Mountain Rangers with suitable military honors, to which,

in the opinion of Colonel Lovewell, their previous services justly entitled them. After a cordial welcome by Colonel Lovewell and an appropriate reply from Captain Waldron, breakfast was served in the large dining tent, after which a little of the "soldiers' joy" was placed upon the table, and toasts and healths were the order of the day.

George English, in consideration of the enthusiastic ardor with which he had volunteered, had during the whole march been treated more as a guest than as a soldier; and, as such, Gridley ventured to propose his health, together with that of the fair lady he had doubtless chosen to be his wife. English briefly thanked the lieutenant for the honor shown him, but made no reference to the second clause of the toast; and, in return, proposed the health of the lieutenant and the mysterious lady, who he doubted not would one day be his wife. This reply produced a decided sensation among the company and rather turned the tables on the lieutenant, who was thus skilfully defeated at his own game.

The drum now beat the roll call, and the colonel gave orders that the Mountain Rangers should take their position on the extreme right, as the post of honor. The army was then put in motion, and soon came to the lovely Connecticut, whose waters seemed to dance in a thousand wavy rings and circles, as if to welcome their approach. Crossing the river, they found themselves in what is now termed the Green Mountain State, a land which grows "fair women and brave men" as naturally as it does fine-wooled sheep and Morgan horses. They passed on through the dense woods and over the swelling hills until they came to the mountains, where the country was much wilder than the region they had lately left; and, as there were no roads, they were obliged, in order to transport their baggage and provisions, to fell trees and dig up or blast rocks in order to gain a pass. Hard and tedious was the

march ; but their hopes, loftier than the trees, and their wills, stronger than the rocks, knew not the feeling of discouragement ; and the bear, the wolf, and the deer were levelled by the musket as were the trees by the axe. Nor were all the hordes of howling and ferocious wild beasts that swept down the mountain sides able to check the progress of the patriotic band, who were as determined to clear the land of foes as were the settlers who followed after of its forests. After a toilsome and fatiguing march they surmounted the heights of the Green Mountains and passed down their western slope. They were now approaching a territory guarded by towering forts and warlike armies of French and Indians, who had struck bloody hands in unholy alliance to do battle against the crown of England, to whom the allegiance of the country was due, and to murder its faithful subjects, who had purchased, settled upon, and improved the land. All along the frontiers of the settlements blockhouses, log garrisons, and forts had been erected, in which the helpless mother and her innocent babes could take refuge whenever she heard the bloodthirsty hordes of wolfish savages howling for their innocent blood. The man who went forth in the early morning to his labor of clearing the forests took his gun as the necessary companion of his axe, and placed the former beside the same tree he felled with the latter. If he returned not at night, his waiting wife, when the morning again dawned upon her sleepless eyes, might find him dead at the foot of the tree in which his axe was still driven, pierced by the bullet of some treacherous and lurking foe ; or, if the husband was spared to return, it might only be to find his beloved wife lying lifeless before his door, with her scalp torn from her broken skull, and the bodies of his darling babes, with their brains dashed out, piled upon her mangled form.

To drive this band of demon monsters from the land

and give them battle, even within the fortresses and strong enclosures they had erected, was the object for which they had marched hither ; and fully determined were they to accomplish their purpose ; and when this should be effected, the Mountain Rangers, together with such others as they could persuade to join their ranks, had another mission to fulfil ; which was, to follow the savage foe to their bloody dens and recapture their imprisoned lambs, who, though as yet unslain, were trembling in the very jaws of their remorseless captors.

After passing the mountains they found the land partially settled and with roads on which they could more conveniently pass ; and Colonel Lovewell sent forward some twenty men to reconnoitre the country and ascertain if all was quiet along their intended route. Most of these, after a long march in advance, during which they discovered nothing of a hostile character, halted to await the approach of the main body of the army ; while a part, among whom were Gridley, Lee, and English, kept on.

They were passing through a wild morass in the vicinity of Lake Champlain, when the loud report of a gun was heard, and the hat of George English fell to the ground, pierced by a bullet and a large buckshot. Looking in the direction of the report, they saw the blue curls of smoke rising from the moving bushes ; and, cocking their guns, they rushed towards the ambush. Just before they reached it, three Indians and a Frenchman, all of immense stature, arose upon their feet and fired upon them. But their aim was too hasty to be effectual, and the balls only cut the limbs above their heads ; while at the discharge of their own pieces, which was nearly simultaneous with that of their foes, one of the Indians and the Frenchman fell lifeless to the ground. The other two retreated hastily behind a distant tree ; and the English quickly reloaded their guns and gave chase, separating so as to bring the

savages in view of one or the other as they approached the tree. But, when they attained a position which enabled them to see behind the tree, no Indian was to be seen.

"Ah," cried Gridley, "they are shy as loons; they must have crawled off while we were reloading, keeping the tree between themselves and us."

"If so," replied Lee, "they are more cunning than those of the great Paugus tribe, and we shall be obliged to keep a sharp lookout for them."

He had hardly finished the sentence when a bullet passed through his coat and buried itself with a "thug" in the tall spruce behind him, while in the direction of the report were seen the two Indians, bounding like frightened deer for a still more distant covert. They discharged their pieces at them; but the distance was so great and the bushes so thick that their balls took no effect; and as the savages were so much in advance of them as to render pursuit unavailing as well as dangerous, they concluded to rejoin their companions.

"Well," said Gridley as they turned back, "they are cool and resolute fellows, any how."

"They are so," replied Lee; "and if this is a specimen of their murderous and determined spirit when only four are aroused, what have we to expect when we meet the whole bloody crew of French and Indians?"

"I tell you, gentlemen," cried the lieutenant, "we have got to fight; yes, we must fight, or fall."

"We will fight, then," said Waldron, as he came up on a hard run. "But what is all this firing for? I have run a full mile to let old Bess here take a part in the conversation."

"So have I," exclaimed Walcott; "and, if you don't show me a redskin in a minute, my gun will go off of itself."

"You are too late, gentlemen," replied Gridley; "we have brought down only half of the covey, and the other half has got away."

"Cunning dogs, these Canada Indians," added Lee; "they have never been tamed like our old Pequawketts."

"No," rejoined Captain Waldron; "but we will tame them ere we return to Laconia, or be tamed ourselves."

"The prospect is about as flattering for the one as the other," replied Gridley, "if we are to judge by the way in which they threw their bullets through Lee's coat and English's hat. One inch lower, and he would have stood a slim chance of ever seeing his whitehaired, redeyed, chalkfaced spouse in this world at least."

"That's a fact," replied English, laughing; "I should have gone to the land of ghosts, without doubt."

"Stop that!" exclaimed Gridley with a shudder. "Don't bring up any more of those creatures until we lay the one already up."

Here the main body hove in sight; and the bodies of the Indian and Frenchman were dragged forward, in order, as Gridley said, to let the soldiers smell blood and be made thereby the more fierce to taste it. Night was now coming on; and as the colonel did not wish to camp in the vicinity of the slaughtered Indians, lest they should thereby irritate those who should come for their bodies, and so bring on a general and premature action, he marched rapidly forward as long as a man could be plainly distinguished from a tree, and then halted for the night. A double guard was then set about the encampment, which was to be regularly and frequently relieved. But, notwithstanding all these precautions, four of the guard were shot down at the same time from as many different points around the encampment. The whole army was aroused in an instant, and sallied out to meet the foe; but all was still and silent as the grave, and not an Indian or Frenchman was to be seen or heard. Yet there lay the lifeless bodies of four sentinels, one of whom was the brave Coffin, him of the great Bomazeen, or Bloody Bones, fight at

Norridgewock, and who, after having suffered and escaped so much peril and danger at home, had marched so far only to find a strange grave in a strange land. And most bitterly did the Mountain Rangers deplore his loss, for he was one of the bravest of their heroic band. They raised him, and, loath to believe him dead, endeavored for a long time, by rubbing and chafing his powerless limbs, to restore him to consciousness; but the vital spark had forever fled, and all their efforts were unavailing. As the Rev. Mr. Moody, who was chaplain of the Mountain Rangers in the Cape Breton expedition, had received a call to settle in the eastern part of New Hampshire, they now had no chaplain; and it devolved upon Captain Waldron to make such remarks as he deemed appropriate upon committing to the earth the body of their brave comrade.

"One of the bravest and truest men," said he, "of our gallant little band has fallen. Such are the chances of war, that he who to-day avenges the death of a friend may to-morrow be obliged to pay the penalty therefor by giving up his own life. But we should not repine at this; for in any condition or circumstance of life we are liable to fall, and the tenure of our lives is at the best frail and uncertain."

Then, looking down at the body, he continued: "We must lay thy once active but now lifeless body into its narrow bed, there to sleep its last, long sleep; and we have selected this pleasant spot beneath this stately maple for thy last resting-place, where the solemn roar of yon river, as it rolls on, shall ever moan thy sad, funereal dirge. The brown thrush shall sing at sunset above thy peaceful head, the tiny feet of the bounding squirrel shall press lightly upon the mould that covers thee, and the winged maple bud shall whirl and flutter above thy lonely grave. Brother, thy last battle is fought; and wars, and tumults, and revenge will henceforth be strangers to thy breast.

The Indian warrior may pass by or even rest his weary head upon the rude mound that rises over thee ; but his presence will never disturb thy quiet rest nor arouse one angry passion in thy pulseless heart, neither shall his fiercest war whoop break thy gentle slumber. Wild beasts may howl, furious storms may rage, and all the red artillery of heaven thunder above thee ; but thou wilt heed them not. But here, beneath the leafy mound, shall thy head repose, pillowed upon the kind bosom of thy mother earth, while thy spirit shall be also at peace upon the bosom of thy Father and thy Friend."

The body, wrapped, as it was wont to sleep, in its martial blanket, was now lowered into its humble bed and covered with earth and leaves ; and, after a parting volley over the grave, the Mountain Rangers turned and slowly and sadly left the spot. Breakfast was now ready, and the soldiers partook but sparingly ; for their brows were clouded and their spirits overshadowed by the melancholy death of poor Coffin, whose loss was felt as a severe blow. During all their trials and troubles from the attack of the Indians upon the garrisons at Cocheco to the present campaign he had ever borne his part as a brave and faithful soldier both in the cause of his country and his king. He had shunned no danger and yielded to no foe ; and to all save the midnight assassin, who crept upon him unawares, he had ever proved more than a match.

It was on a bright, silvery afternoon when the forces of New Hampshire came in sight of the army of General Amherst, which was encamped upon a commanding hill overlooking Lake Champlain at its narrow and serpentine bends, nearly a third of the distance from what is now termed Whitehall to the junction of the lake with its nursling sister, that most beautiful of all waters — Lake George. General Amherst had marched up by the way

of Albany, and had reached the encampment the previous evening, to await the arrival of Colonel Lovewell and his forces. Amherst had received notice of their near approach from a runner he had sent out to reconnoitre the adjoining country, and gave orders that they should be received with military honors. After the colonel had been presented to the general, which office was performed by George English, who had become acquainted with him at Boston, and the usual general ceremonies on such occasions were over, the companies were dismissed, and the officers and soldiers made more individually acquainted with each other.

Then, after a hasty lunch and a stiff glass of the "soldiers' joy," the tents were struck, and the army marched up to the Great Bend, that they might be nearer the fort and encampment of the enemy and have a less distance to march on the following morning. They saw no signs of the enemy, and the country seemed wild and untrodden by the foot of man. They encamped upon a little interval upon which there were no trees, in order that the enemy should not be able to approach them unawares, stationed a strong guard, and slept upon their arms, which, though they might have been thought a hard couch by others, were to the tired soldier as soft as downy pillows. The soldiers arose the next morning much refreshed and eager for the fray; and after breakfast, which was served at a very early hour, a little party was sent forward to reconnoitre the enemy's posts and report his position. While awaiting their return, General Amherst, who had received news from Schenectady by a soldier who had arrived from there during the night, now paraded his men in a hollow square and addressed them as follows:—

"Gentlemen officers and fellow-soldiers: It gives me great pleasure, as I run my eye along the line of athletic and noble men now before me, to see that every eye sparkles

with enthusiasm and every countenance beams with determined resolution. This is the spirit, and these the men, fellow-soldiers, which we need for this day. Our country calls, by the wails of the living and the groans of the dying, that to-day we avenge the cruel deaths of our brothers in arms and their unoffending wives and children. But a few hours ago a messenger, covered with the blood of his wife and child, whom he had striven, but unavailingly, to protect, arrived in camp ; and from him I have learned that additional French and Indian forces have swept down from the wilds of Canada, murdering and slaughtering the peaceful settlers along our borders. These forces are under the command of Monsieur de la Durantage and Le Moine de St. Helene, who were appointed by Count Frontenac, governor of Canada, who had left it optional with them what point of the English settlements to attack first. The Indians are led on by the great Agnice, chief of the Upper Canadas, who exhorts his followers to forget all they have suffered in the prospect they now have of avenging their wrongs. These French and Indian marauders have marched from Canada to spread havoc, war, and death all along our borders. On their way they met a party of Indian women, who gave them all the necessary information to enable them to approach the little fenced town of Schenectady at its most accessible point. They entered the gates to which the squaws had directed them without encountering any opposition, and, dividing into several parties, stationed themselves at the doors and raised the terrible war whoop. They next attacked the garrison, and, forcing the door, put all its inmates, women and children, and those who had fled thither for protection, to the knife. Not satisfied with this, they destroyed the garrison itself, which fell a sacrifice to the devouring flames ; and a private dwelling, in which the inmates had sought to protect themselves by making the door as fast and secure

as possible, was forced by St. Helene and his party, and all fell before their bloody knives. When my informant left, massacre and pillage were going on in every direction, and, after all the English had fallen, the maddened savages spent the night in feasting and carousing. A beautiful girl, named Lucinda, who was then on a visit to some near and dear relatives at the garrisoned houses, and who in the *mêlée* escaped from the gate, was overtaken, and her dark, flowing tresses driven into her white brow by the dull edge of the savage tomahawk. Fellow-soldiers, shall these atrocious murders go unrevenged?" One unanimous "No!" burst from the lips of every soldier; and Amherst, exchanging a few words with the reconnoitring party which had just returned, continued: "Fellow-soldiers, the scouts bring the intelligence that this bloody band of savage marauders of which I have been speaking have entered the fort at Ticonderoga under Durance and St. Helene and joined the forces of Debalines. Soldiers, are you ready for the battle?"

"All ready!" was the general response which rung from the now eager and excited soldiery, and the army was immediately put in motion.

They reached the vicinity of Ticonderoga about the middle of the afternoon. The enemy had heard of their unwelcome approach and dreaded to meet them; but, fearing lest they should gain the imputation of cowardice at the hands of their cruel governor, Frontenac, if they failed to do so, they held a hasty council of war and determined to risk a battle. They concluded that it would be safer to meet the English upon the plain in front of the fort than to await their attack within the walls; as, in case they were defeated in the first instance, they could retreat within the fortress and there defend themselves for a long time. Therefore, as the English came in sight of the fort, they beheld a large force of French and Indians

drawn up before it. The French soon paraded in regular battle array; but the Indians rushed to the adjacent woods and disappeared. Amherst directed his subalterns to keep a sharp eye on the redskins, whose intention, he saw, was to secrete themselves in the woods and thence annoy the flanks. To defeat this manœuvre, the Mountain Rangers, who were more acquainted with the Indian mode of warfare than the other companies, were stationed between the English flank and the woods, and the order was given for the general attack. The firing first commenced upon the flanks, while the main body of both the French and English forces advanced slowly to the attack. The orders for a general discharge were given on both sides at nearly the same instant, and the quick volley of the rattling musketry and the booming roar of the heavy cannon mingled and rolled over the plain and echoed back in thunder peals from the distant hills. Both stood their ground bravely, while the combatants fell thick and fast on both sides, and the flanks were engaged in bloody conflict with the Indians for the mastery. Orders were then given in front for the charge to be made; and the heavy columns of the French reeled at the shock, and then gave way and retreated. Captain Waldron and his gallant band had been equally successful in repulsing the savages who had assailed the flanks, and, pursuing them around a hill, came in sight of the retreating French. Seeing at a glance that their intention was to regain the fort, he ceased to follow the retreating savages, and, turning towards the fort, succeeded in intercepting their retreat. But the French did not discover this manœuvre until Waldron was fairly and fully between themselves and the fortress, and so rushed on until they were mown down by the galling fire of the Mountain Rangers in front as well as by the sweeping discharges of the forces under Amherst in the rear. Panic-struck, they fled for the woods, whither they were

followed by their victorious foes, who pursued them some distance into the forests, and then, as night was fast coming on, gave up the chase, and returned and took possession of the fort. They found therein a large quantity of ammunition and provisions, which was extremely fortunate, as the next day a heavy rain set in, which lasted several days. The soldiers, however, being comfortably sheltered, and having plenty of provisions, were quite at their ease; and as soon as the weather cleared Amherst led his forces to the attack on Crown Point, whither the French had retreated. The English were now ready and anxious for another engagement; but as they came in sight of the fort their hopes were frustrated, for they saw the last of the retreating French just leaving it. The question of farther pursuit was now raised, and, on being put to a vote, was unanimously decided in the affirmative; and the next day they pursued the retreating army to Isle aux Noix. But, after a series of disasters and many unsuccessful efforts to breast the furious storms of Lake Champlain, Amherst became convinced that it was impossible to take the place, and retreated to Crown Point.

And now, for the first time, an opportunity was offered the Mountain Rangers to make their proposition. The evening after they reached Crown Point, Captain Waldron and many other leading spirits of the Rangers met in secret conclave; but the subject of their deliberations did not transpire until the next morning.

As the object for which the king's forces were sent into this section of the country was now considered as having been attained, at least so far as was possible, the army was paraded the following morning and addressed in a brief speech by General Amherst, the substance of which was, that the original plan of the campaign contemplated the driving of the enemy from this section of the country, and the passage of the army down the River Sorel to the St.

Lawrence to join the forces of Pfidiaux and Wolfe. But so disastrous had the storms of the lake proved to the craft which it was necessary to employ in order to reach the other forces that he was forced to abandon the reduction of Isle aux Noix and commence a retreat. He thought it advisable to retire by the way of Albany, and should therefore immediately issue orders to that effect.

Britton Waldron now came forward and suggested that, as the original design was now accomplished so far as laid in their power, a favorable opportunity was now presented to chastise the murderous tribe of St. Francis Indians which resided upon a river of that name in Canada. They were the most hostile and dangerous horde of savages with which the English settlers of Laconia had to contend, and had seized every opportunity when their soldiers were absent to spread havoc and murder throughout its borders. Houses had been burned, horses stolen, and cattle by scores killed or had their tongues cut out, and were otherwise maimed and maltreated.

"But, gentlemen," continued Waldron, as he wiped the gathering tears from his eyes, "these outrages are comparatively as dust in the balance when weighed with the fact that our nearest and dearest friends, if they have not ere this perished beneath the murderous tomahawk, are pining in hopeless anguish in the filthy wigwams of these ferocious wolves. And, gentlemen, we, the Mountain Rangers of Laconia, propose to liberate them if they still live, or perish in the attempt. But to this end we need aid and assistance from our brother soldiers to enable us to set at liberty our dearest friends if they still live, and if not," (here the long-pent-up tears gushed from his eyes so freely that many a stouthearted soldier wept from sympathy,) "to avenge their death. Gentlemen, who will volunteer for this expedition? If any, let them step forward."

As he closed, Major Rogers and two hundred trained

warriors stepped forward, and the welkin rang with shouts of joy and congratulations of welcome which broke from the lips of the Mountain Rangers as they saw this ready response to the appeal of their beloved captain. The volunteers now commenced arming themselves with knives, and tomahawks, and such other weapons as they deemed necessary in their contemplated expedition; at which sight George English, who had fought bravely at Ticonderoga, wept like a child with joy. He had on his warlike accoutrements, gave his horse to an English officer, and, tying his blanket about his well-stuffed knapsack, was soon ready for a start. A large quantity of provisions was secured by all the soldiers; and every precaution being taken at the outset to insure a comfortable journey, the company, with beaming faces and stout hearts, set out for the wilds of Canada.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A FOOL RECONNOITRES THE LODGES AT ST. FRANCIS. — HIS FLUTE PLAYING AND PLOT TO ASCERTAIN IF PALEFACES ARE THERE. — THE INDIAN GUARD AND OLD OWL KING'S NEST.

It is a dark night at St. Francis, and there is a seemingly foolish creature talking to himself as he wanders among the Indian wigwams. He appears to be some poor demented being who has strayed hither from his bed of leaves in the deep, dark forest. Let us listen to his mutterings.

"Foolhardy did that fellow who was with the Hingins, and who pretended to be one himself, call me the other day when he met me in the woods, and said I was not worth taking home, for they couldn't get any bounty on a fool's scalp. But, lackaday! I followed 'em till I came in sight of these wigwams, when I laid down and waited till night; and now here I am — Fool, or Foolhardy, or what not, just as they've a mind to call me. So, fool, let's move around and see what's to be diskivered; and if you are likely to get found out, you can hide yourself where you hid your gun, under the leaves. Be careful of your lame foot, though, for it is badly blistered by that old, torn shoe, in your long tramp; and don't forget, when the sun rises, to tie up your weak eye. Hark! what music's that? It don't sound zackly like a fife. P'raps it's the music of the stars, who are out serenading Aurora, the goddess of the morning. They are so high up that may be they can see

her blushing face as she peeps over the distant mountains, and so have got benamoured with her fascinating charms. Only see 'em wink at her! No, it can't be them, either; it is an Hingin flute, as soft as the night itself, and twice as full of love, for I can see the charmer who is tooting on't. O, how sweet he blows her out! See there! if he hain't kneeled right down on the ground close to one of the wigwams! What do you spoze that means? Hush, you fool! for in the doorway of the wigwam stands an angel; and only see her eyes! How the love light flashes down through their long lashes, like the gleam of stars through the cloudy fringes of night! And what a form, too! one of Nature's masterpieces, to the symmetry of which gold and silver trinkets would add nothing. I don't know but I ought to look t'other way, but hardly think I will, though; for it makes my weak eye better already looking at the little birdie. Her hair, too, is worth noticing; for it is of the deepest black, and falls in wavy clusters clear to her knees. Fool! you must snuggle to the earth and keep still. There! she stretches out her little hand, and the music stops, the flute rolls on the ground, and the player staggers with trembling steps towards her. Now he clasps the tiny hand, and falls upon his knees, and points up to the stars. She motions for him to rise; and now, interlacing their arms, they step slowly and cautiously into the wigwam. But what does it all mean? O fool, thou art indeed a fool not to think before now. This must be the way the redskins do their courting; and it ain't so slow a way either. Shouldn't object to trying it myself; though I'm afraid I shouldn't make out quite so well as the fluter. Now to carry out a fool's thought. There lays the flute, and I'll get it and practise in the woods all day to-morrow, and then I'll try my skill in courting Hingin squaws, or angels, more like, for they look as if they had just fallen down

from the sky. Now I have it ; but 'tis only a rough, hollow stick, after all ; and I wonder how that wooer could git so much love and music out of it as he did. But I must look round some more, and may be I shall come across somebody that I've seen afore. But who's that speaking — no, singing ? I must crouch down agin, and hear what's going on, and see what's going to be done. Aha ! another fellow under the winder of his love ; but he hain't got no flute, and so he sings. Well, sing away there, my fine fellow ; you may raise her yet ; that's my advice to you ; and, though 'tis only the advice of a fool, take it, and much good may it do you. 'Pears to me she's a long while comin' though ; and I've a good mind to give him my flute. Pshaw ! I forgot that I hadn't got any mind. But hadn't I better give him the flute ? 'Twould fetch her indeed ; I know 'twould. But I guess I'll let him work ; for I don't know as 'twould be just right to let him have the flute, since 'tis only a borrowed one. O my stars ! there she comes ; and she's every mite and grain as handsome as the other. He bounds lightly to her side and looks eagerly into her eyes, as if in hopes to see his image there. But no ; she turns her face away, and he looks sad enough, poor fellow, and is about to leave her side, when she catches his hand and says, 'The little pigeon will think of it ; and if her lover will come in two moons from to-night she will then give him an answer.' How his face brightens up as she speaks ! And now he bounds lightly away. Well, now that all is still and there is nothing more to be seen I will go back to my leafy nest in the woods, so that I may be able to wake up early and begin practising on the flute."

The next day following the above-named adventures of Foolhardy among the lodges of the St. Francis Indians some of the tribe who were returning from an early hunt through the thick woods thought they heard the distressed

squalls of a dying catbird among the dense bushes, and turned in the direction of the sounds to ascertain their cause. What was their surprise on reaching the spot to find, instead of the poor bird, the unfortunate Foolhardy, with distended cheeks and protruding eyes, blowing and puffing away at the rude flute as if for dear life, and seemingly entirely entranced with his wonderful execution and perfect command of the ventages! They approached with so little noise, while his flute made so much, that he did not discover them until a hand was laid upon his shoulder. Looking up, Foolhardy saw six or eight large Indians directly behind him, one of whom said, —

“Ha! The palefaced, squalling cat must come with us.”

But Foolhardy was not frightened, and kept squalling on the flute, until, as the Indian still persisted and gave him a sudden jerk of the shoulder, Foolhardy struck his hand a smart rap with the flute, and replied, —

“Go way, red dog, till I finish this tune, and don’t meddle with me agin,” and again commenced his squallings.

The Indians, surprised at the cool bearing of this strange creature, stood silent and looking at each other suspiciously, until Foolhardy finally stopped of his own accord, and, tightening the bandage about his lame foot and that over his eye, arose to his feet. As he did so, he drew a half-picked bone from one of his pockets and a crust of bread from the other and began to gnaw them alternately. After he had filled his mouth he drew up the knee of the lame foot, and, holding it suspended, hopped about upon the other foot, dancing towards the Indians and singing out “Tum-te-tum, tum-te-tum” with an energy that was really startling. The Indians fell back as he approached and asked him his name.

“A red dog like you,” said he, “who met me in the woods yesterday, said I was Foolhardy, and said he could

get no bounty on a fool's scalp, and so wouldn't take me along ; but I didn't like that name very well ; so I changed it to Foolhandy, and so have come along on my own hook to sell my scalp to the red dogs — tum-te-tum."

"But where did you come from?" asked the savage.

"From the downmost horn of the moon," returned Foolhandy. "How should you like to be in the moon? — in a horn — eh? — tum-te-tum."

"Let us leave him," said one of the Indians ; "for the Great Spirit will be angry if we meddle with one like him."

One of the savages, on looking more closely at the flute, recognized it, and cried out, —

"Ah, thief, that is the flute of Occum, the son of the great chief Titigaw. Where did you get it?"

"Found it on the ground," replied Foolhandy. "Tum-te-tum."

The Indians now held a whispered consultation among themselves, and finally told the fool that he must go with them before the chief's son and account for the stolen flute. They then tied him, while he still kept up his "tum-te-tum," and seemed so elated that they could hardly hold him. As they approached the village, one of the party ran ahead and informed Occum of their finding his flute ; and, as they came into the village, he met them before the very lodge where Foolhandy had picked the instrument up, and, looking at it, declared it to be his own. By this time a host of Indians, who had seen the fool led in, gathered about him ; but he seemed to enjoy himself as well as ever, and still danced and kept up his "tum-te-tum."

Several young squaws came out of the lodge to see the fun, among whom was the identical girl who had taken such a prominent part in the scene of the night before. Occum, inspired by the presence of his lady love, now put

on his loftiest airs and jerked poor Foolhandy about in fine style, demanding that he should tell how he came by it. Foolhandy only answered by singing "tum-te-tum" until he was untied, when, driving the Indians back with the flute, he threw himself on his knees as Occum had done the night before, squalled upon the flute, and then, letting it drop to the ground, ran and caught the hand of the young squaw, and, falling upon his knees, pointed to the stars precisely as the young Indian had done the evening previous. The young squaw, who was among the first to interpret the "tableau," dashed into the lodge, the moment he dropped her hand, amid a perfect roar of shouts from the delighted crowd ; while Occum, who would gladly have wreaked his vengeance upon the head of Foolhandy had he dared to do so, now stoutly protested that the flute did not belong to himself and that he knew nothing of it. So the flute lay upon the ground unclaimed and untouched ; for whoever took it must of course take the joke with it. Foolhandy then drew his bone and crust from his pocket and gnawed away upon them, occasionally uttering his "tum-te-tum ;" and so superstitious were the Indians in regard to his supposed sacred character as a fool that no one of them durst meddle with him further. But Tom Noble, the brother of that blueëyed maid of heaven, Fanny, who had adopted the Indian mode of life, now came up, and, to show his daring to the Indians and let them see how far he could excel them in impudence, spit upon the bone which Foolhandy was gnawing, saying, tauntingly, that his bone needed sauce and had now got it.

"Yes," replied Foolhandy ; "'tis a good deal better. Let's have some more of it," and struck Tom full in the mouth with the long bone, cutting his lip and loosening his front teeth, so that the blood ran freely. Noble sprang for his knife, and cried out, —

"Fool or knave, you bloody palefaced dog, you shall now lose your scalp."

"I have lost it once," replied Foolhandy, "and the red dogs who took it said they couldn't git the bounty money on it; but if you want to go marketing with it, take it and try it."

The maddened Noble sprang forward, and, twisting Foolhandy's hair around his left hand, drew his keen knife around his head and pulled off his scalp, when the fool's head presented the appearance of a recent scar extending nearly over the entire surface. Noble dropped the scalp upon the ground, looked at his hands with horror and disgust, and turned pale even through his paint.

"It's a foul and unclean spirit," said he, shuddering.

"I thought as much," said Occum; "and I would not have touched him for the handsomest gun I ever saw."

"Bring me water," cried Noble, "that I may cleanse my hands."

"Better cleanse your heart first," replied the fool, "and then try your luck in marketing your prize there," said he, pointing to the putrid scalp. "Ha! ha! it came from the head of a foul spirit; and whosoever touches the inner surface next the brain—and which was heated by the fires of the pit—is poisoned and polluted forever."

Here a squaw came with a vessel of water, which she poured upon Noble's hands.

"Turn it into his mouth," cried the fool; "for his heart begins to kindle and burn with the poison, and his cowardly face to turn pale already."

"It does so!" screamed the squaw.

"O," cried Occum, "send for the great medicine man to drive out the evil spirit and make him whole."

"Send for your hot fire-water," said the fool, "to put out the raging fires of the forest."

As Noble staggered and fell upon the ground Occum cried out, "O, good fool, is there nothing that will save him?"

"Yes," replied the fool ; "but you have not got it here. And when he dies the plague will go through the whole tribe, and you will all die like the great Attikameques tribe, which once dwelt beyond the big river, who all perished in one day."

"O! O!" screamed the entire affrighted crowd. "Tell us what will restore him and stop the terrible plague, and our swiftest runners shall fly and bring it at once."

"Well," rejoined Foolhandy, "the soft hand of a black-haired, Christian, palefaced woman laid upon his brow will restore him and prevent the spread of the plague."

"We have one," shouted Occum, "shut up in the same lodge with the sheep which we brought from the country of the palefaces : let her be brought."

Away bounded the runners, and soon returned, dragging Rozella Langdell, pale and trembling, to the side of the dying man. She laid her hand, as was directed, upon his brow ; while the fool muttered over some unintelligible gibberish, and thereupon declared that he was saved. In a few moments Noble arose to his feet amid the deafening shouts of the savage multitude ; and, wiping off the froth from his mouth, declared himself completely cured.

Rozella was immediately hurried back to her prison ; but the fool followed after, and no one dared prevent him.

They took her to an obscure, dark wigwam, situated in the willows by the river side, and pushed her, groaning audibly, over the threshold. But, despite that groan, the fool had so little feeling for her that, as she disappeared, he gave a much louder "tum-te-tum" than usual, dancing upon one leg, and squalling upon his flute until the whole woods rung with the hideous music.

The savages were now at a loss to know whether Foolhandy was a fool or a wizard, and for that reason thought it policy to treat him with great consideration, lest a

contrary course should bring about some awful calamity. They therefore again gathered around him and offered him the best lodge in the village.

"No," replied Foolhandy to their proffers; "I sleep well enough now."

"Where do you sleep?" inquired the Indians.

"I jest swing my leg over the limb of a big tree," said he, "and hang head downward all night like a 'possum."

"But what do you do when it rains?" asked they.

"O," cried the fool, "I have got a big towzer of an old queen's arm down there in the woods, and when it rains very hard I crawl into the barrel."

Thereat the savages all marvelled greatly, and with their "Ugh!" left him to pursue his own course unharmed and unmolested.

"Father," asked Rozella, as she was roughly thrust into her gloomy prison as has just been narrated, "why is it that of late we have been kept in this loathsome den and treated so much worse than we were when we first came among the savages?"

"I have been at a loss to ascertain the reason, dear Rozella," replied the squire, "and asked the guard to-day, when he allowed me to walk out a few minutes, the same question, and he informed me that the English were making war upon the French and Indians at three different points at least, and that, as the English had powerful armies who were about to march against Quebec, Niagara, Ticonderoga, and Crown Point, there would be a bloody time through both the Canadas. He also said that probably I should not be permitted again to go out until peace was declared, and intimated that, in case Wolfe took Quebec, Amherst Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and Prideaux Niagara and Montreal, the English prisoners here would be immediately put to death."

"Alas! alas!" cried Rozella, as she fell upon her knees

beside her mother, who was sobbing so piteously that she could not speak. "Dear mother, do not grieve so ; for we may yet be delivered. The all-seeing eye sleeps not nor slumbers ; his ear is not deaf that it cannot hear, nor his arm shortened that it cannot save."

"True," responded Elsie, coming towards the weeping mother and daughter ; "but, Rozella, you told me once that He might save the soul at the expense of the body ; and, for my part, I must confess I see no way of escape."

"Neither do I," said the squire, with trembling lips and tearful eyes ; and, with a despairing shake of the head, he threw his face into his hands, as his elbows rested upon his knees and his long gray hair fell over his wrinkled brow.

And even the taciturn Mr. Tufton, who rarely spoke and never seemed excited, now paced the floor in nervous agitation and smoothed with his hand the uncombed locks of his younger daughters, who wept as they buried their faces upon their father's bosom. At length Mrs. Langdell, who had recovered sufficiently to speak, murmured, "O, it is hard to suffer and die thus !"

"Certainly it is," replied Rozella ; "but did not He have to endure pangs infinitely greater than our own who suffered upon the cross that we might live ? But my greatest agony is that you and father are obliged to endure in your old age such heartrending afflictions. And could you but be removed to our dear home in Laconia, I would count my own sufferings but as amusements and my afflictions as pleasant pastimes. But still I have faith that we shall yet be delivered. The Lord hath thus far delivered us from all our afflictions, and it would be ungenerous and unjust to doubt him now. So let us wait upon him and stand still, and we shall see his salvation."

The good squire shook his head sadly and replied, "I have no faith."

"But you will have faith," replied Rozella, "when the struggle comes."

"Faith will do but little," rejoined the squire, "in that trying hour, without works."

"Precisely so, dear father," replied Rozella. "Only have the faith, and, when the opportunity comes to work, do what seemeth the very best with all your might. Dying grace is not given to the strong and healthy; but when the final struggle comes, if he has cherished faith, grace rushes to his aid, and the soul triumphs even in the utter fall of the body. So it may be in this case; and, though all is dark and despairing about us, faith will help us to exert ourselves to the utmost in the hour of trial, and grace will complete the work of our salvation."

The brighteyed Owega now came up with a smile and said, "Miss Rozella, I have been contriving a plan for our safety which I think will succeed; and if the English do come, and the Indians rush in to butcher us before they fly, as is their custom, I think my plan, in addition to my wolfskin performance, which you know the superstitious savages are greatly afraid of, will drive every one of them into the river."

"What can it be, dear Owega?" asked Rozella, softly kissing her brown forehead.

"Miss Rozella knows," replied she, "that in the other part of the wigwam are the sheep which the Indians drove hither from the settlements."

"To be sure," rejoined Rozella; "but what then?"

"Well," cried Owega, "let this squaw alone for the rest." Whereupon all smiled, and the squire began to have faith.

"Tum-te-tum, tum-te-tum," sung the fool, as he buried his gun under the leaves, and taking his flute, of which he now considered himself a perfect master, started for the village.

"Now, fool," said he, "you and I and Handy are going down among those beaver houses again to reconnoitre ; so put your bandage about your neck, ready to slip over your eye, and come along. Now, Foolhandy, I'll tell you one thing ; but you mustn't let the cat out ; remember that, fool. This expedition to-night is not exactly Hervey's Meditations, but a fool's meditations among the spirits ; and I am going to raise them, too ; now you see if I don't. The good spirits within that dark tomb among the willows I believe I could raise by first laying the guard and then breaking open the door. But it is but a fool's thought after all ; for they would perish with hunger in the woods, and their feet would be blistered worse than mine were, even if they were not retaken. I know a way worth twice as much as that, fool, and I will let you into it by and by ; but to-night I must go down to the wigwam among the willows and find how the land lays in that quarter and which is the most accessible point. After that we will stroll round the village, and, if we can't raise one of the handsome spirits, we will raise the deuse with them any how. So straighten up, Foolhandy, for the king's business must be attended to ; you have let yourself to him, and must not neglect his work. There, fool, is the guard, a big swarthy Hingin ; but don't be 'fraid."

"Who's there?" shouted the guard in his own language, of which the fool could understand a little and guess at the rest.

"Tum-te-tum-te-to," sung out the fool.

"What does that mean?" asked the guard.

"It means," said Handy, "that I have got a sore toe, and I have come down here to play you a tune on my flute. Will you dance?"

"Where did you come from to-night?" inquired the Indian.

"All the way from the great owl king's nest," replied the

fool. "Did you ever see him? One of his wings is as large as that black cloud up there, and would cover the whole village of St. Francis as with the pall of night. We young owls have to come after his food in the night, for it takes twelve Hingins for his breakfast every day; and when I fly back I shall carry him the biggest chap I can find."

The Indian now turned aside and backed off, looking mysteriously at the fool, and let him pass, who reconnoitred as long as he chose around the lodge where the captives were confined, but thought it not prudent to disturb their peaceful slumbers.

"Now, fool," said he, "you see there are two doors, and the one next to the river is the easiest forced. All right; but I would rather show than tell you how I shall do it; so come along, and I will go up into the village and see if I can raise the handsome spirits as the young chief did."

And as he spoke he gave a shrill toot upon his flute, which rang wildly out upon the night air and was answered by the mournful bleat of a sheep in the wigwam by the river.

"Good sign, that," said the fool; "got an answer the first time trying. I shall have good luck, I know I shall. There! did you see the guard sheer out of your way then? He dreads being carried to the owl king's nest. That wasn't a bad idea for a fool, was it? Tum-te-tum. Now, fool, we have got here among the handsome spirits; so now for the work."

And, placing the flute to his lips, he produced such an affective squeak that he almost frightened himself.

"Softer, softer," said he; "a fool shouldn't part with his breath so easily."

And, blowing more gently, he fell upon his knees under the window of one of the lodges and fixed his eyes upon the

door, expecting every moment to see it open. But, although the door did not open, the window did ; but the little cloth lattice which served for a window swung in so softly that he did not hear it, and was not aware of its being open until a bucket of cold water came with full power upon his devoted head. This was an act in the programme of Indian courtship which, as he had seen only the fair side of it, the fool had not learned. Nor did the young squaw know that it was the fool who was playing the lover under her window, or she would not have dared to play him such a trick.

"Murder!" shouted the fool as he sprang upon his feet ; and the young squaw screeched most wofully as she saw who it was.

"Murder! bloody murder!" again bellowed the fool ; and in a moment the whole wigwam was in an uproar. But the fool, recovering his presence of mind, thought it best to beat a speedy retreat, and accordingly hastened back to the woods.

"Well, Foolhandy," said he, after he reached the woods, "how have you succeeded in raising the spirits? O, grandly, grandly ; much better than I expected ; for I have raised one foul spirit and scared her back again to her den. But here," laying his hand upon his breast, "I have raised a spirit which is not so easily laid. I am glad of it, and it couldn't have been better for me than has happened ; for the truth of it is, fool, you had begun to think a great deal too highly of those handsome Hingins, and was already studying out a plan to save them when the army should come ; but that is all over now. It was pretty thoroughly cooled off by that ducking, and I don't feel very warm towards the redskins now. So plague take the flute!" said he, as he broke it around a tree and threw the fragments into the bushes. "Now the fool is himself again, as a fool should be. So now to sleep, and to-morrow I

start for the great Memphremagog to meet the English forces ; for Foolhandy heard the talk in the cabin among the willows, and knows the whole story now, and can lead them to the very wigwam where the captives are imprisoned."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MOUNTAIN RANGERS AND THE FOOL MEET AT THE GREAT LAKE. — THE CONVERSATION. — THEY REACH THE OWL KING'S NEST. — GREAT BATTLE AT ST. FRANCIS. — PLOT DISCOVERED AND CHARACTERS REVEALED.

It was late in autumn when the Indians usually gathered their corn ; whence all such days about that season of the year are called Indian summer days. This day, particularly, had been unusually mild and golden. The Mountain Rangers, with Captain Waldron and Major Rogers, who joined them at Ticonderoga, at their head, had, after a long and tedious march through the gloomy forests of Canada, reached at sunset Lake Memphremagog ; and so pleasant and inviting did its silvery waters look to the tired soldiers that they encamped upon its very shore. The tents were pitched ; but ere their white sheets were raised many a fatigued soldier had pitched himself upon the ground to rest his wearied limbs. After roll call, "Now," said Major Rogers, "for supper," which was soon ready ; the soldiers meanwhile, as they rested, discussing the beauty of the scenery through which they had passed, and that of the lake in particular.

"I have ascertained," said Waldron, "that the outlet of this lake leads directly by the residence of the St. Francis tribe, where, if still living, our dearest earthly treasures are hidden."

"But if Heaven smiles," said English, "those treasures

shall not long be concealed there in the dark, damp dens of those bloodthirsty wolves."

"And I trust," cried Walcott, "that it is the will of Heaven that we rescue all the English prisoners and pluck them unharmed from the hands of the spoiler; for we have thus far been prosperous beyond our most sanguine expectations."

"Yes, yes," responded Gridley; "it will never do to despair now. And though I have nothing to fight for but the cause of my king and country, still, gentlemen, I trust you will not see Grizzly Gridley in the background when the fight commences."

"Gentlemen," cried Major Rogers, "as you are all, or at least Captain Waldron and Ensign Walcott, so very anxious to save your own personal friends, you must be extremely cautious not to let your zeal run away with your judgment; for you know the first thing the savages do, when attacked, is to slay their prisoners before they fly themselves. Therefore it seems very desirable that we ascertain in what particular lodge the captives are kept. If this can be done, I will take the responsibility of planning the attack."

"That," replied Waldron, "will be next to impossible to ascertain without being discovered."

"Then," rejoined Rogers, "the whole expedition may prove a failure, at least so far as saving the captives is concerned."

The little band of officers all sighed deeply as these words fell from the major's lips, and George English almost sobbed aloud. All then gathered around the evening meal, and among the rest an odd-looking creature, whom no one knew or had before noticed. He had long black hair like an Indian, which hung down to his shoulders, with one eye bound up with a bandage, and one foot with another. The soldiers spoke to him; but he

seemed so intent upon eating that he could not stop to answer them, and only made signs that he did not understand their language. He made such fearful havoc among the eatables and drinkables that the soldiers looked upon him as a walking maelstrom, that sucked up every thing that came within its circle, and began to stand back, lest they, too, should be drawn into the dreadful vortex. But finally, to their surprise, he stopped as suddenly as he had begun, and, dancing upon his sound foot, began to sing, "Tum-te-tum, tum-te-tum."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Major Rogers; "we have got a curious specimen of humanity here."

"And amazing good fodder too," replied the specimen, who could now speak English. "Hain't had any thing like it for two months; and if you have got any more curious specimens than what I've seen, fetch 'em on, and I'll dispose of 'em short metre. Tum-te-tum."

"What is your name?" asked Captain Waldron.

"Foolhandy," sung out he, as he still kept dancing.

"Where do you live?" resumed Waldron.

"O, I lives down in the lake with the rest of my tribe," replied Foolhandy.

"And of what tribe or nation are you?" asked Waldron.

"I 'spose I'm a fresh-water merman," said the fool, as he drew a greasy bone and a mouldy crust from his pocket. "Does any body want some of my supper? They may have some to pay for what I've ate to-night." And as he spoke he thrust them under the nose of Waldron, who started back in disgust and got out of his way as soon as possible.

"Are there any Indians in this part of the country?" asked Gridley.

"O, yes," replied the fool; "lots of 'em; and I am going among them to-morrow; and I guess you won't be 'round here long after that, I can tell you."

"You would not betray us, would you?" asked Gridley.

"I wouldn't betray them," replied the fool, "with their handsome squaws, the handsomest that ever turned out of a dark night to a courting match."

"Turned out!" repeated English. "Turned out what?"

"A bucket of water on to a fool's head, by Gad!" replied Foolhandy. "But," continued he, "I'll tell you all about 'em, just to pay 'em for that scurvy trick."

"You've been there, then?" inquired English.

"Shouldn't wonder if I had," rejoined the fool; "and the way they'll play on the flute and court beats all natur'. Tum-te-tum."

"But, Mr. Foolhandy," said English, "do you know of any English captives there?"

"Foolhandy and I saw some once, and they were kept in prison."

"Do you know the whereabouts of that prison?" asked English.

"That's what we want to know," cried Rogers, earnestly; while all the officers sprang upon their feet and gathered around the fool. The fool, however, made no reply, but kept dancing and singing his "tum-te-tum" until English, with tears in his eyes and in a trembling voice, repeated his question.

"Well," replied he, "I knows who does know where the prison is."

"Then why not tell us?" cried English, impatiently.

"It's the fellow that comes from the great owl king's nest and who catches his prey for him. The owl king's wing is as broad as a cloud, and he eats twelve Hingins for breakfast every morning."

"And who is he?" asked English, almost beside himself.

"It is Foolhandy," answered the fool.

"And that is yourself, is it not?" asked English.

"It was," answered the fool, "when the old guard of the

prison backed off his beat, for fear I should carry him off."

"And will you go with us," said English, "and show us the prison?"

"Yes," cried the fool, "if you make me cap'n."

"We'll make you any thing," replied Rogers, "if you will go. I will give you up my commission if you will do it."

"Well," replied the fool, after dancing and singing a moment, "now listen to your new major. It is a long way there, and we must be there by to-morrow night. And the woods where my old Towzer lays hid under the leaves must be reached by this time in the evening. Therefore, when the first bright star backs out to give place for Aurora, be sure you awake your new major."

And, again singing out his "tum-te-tum," the fool dropped upon the ground and was fast asleep before the others could get to their blankets.

English now turned to the officers and exclaimed, "Thus far hath Fortune helped us; let us trust still."

"We have been prospered," said Waldron, warmly, "beyond our most sanguine expectations."

"Yes," replied both Walcott and Gridley; "and if we continue to prosper thus to the end we will have a day of thanksgiving and rejoicing."

"A day!" repeated Waldron. "A lifetime you mean."

A strong guard was now placed around the encampment and all was soon quiet and undisturbed.

The next morning, at early dawn, the Mountain Rangers, with a fool for their guide, took up their march for the village of St. Francis; and, as they had a long day's march before them, little conversation was had save an occasional exclamation at the picturesque beauty of the lake and its adjoining scenery.

As they passed by its outlet and were travelling along

the banks of the river, Rogers asked the fool the name of the beautiful stream along which their course lay.

"They calls it Magog," replied the fool, laughing for the first time ; at which all were surprised at a laugh from so sober a fool, and asked the cause of his mirth.

"O," replied he, "only something that popped into a fool's head. Whichever gets whipped, this will be the last great fight between the Hingins and the English ; and, as I got defeated when I tried my skill single handed, I am now going again to urge my suit at the point of the bayonet, and see if bullets will not favor my claim, and, in deciding my own fate, decide that of my country too."

All looked astonished to hear a fool talk in this style.

They now increased their speed, and at length, just as the darkness of early evening began to settle down upon the trees, reached the fool's head quarters.

"Keep still," commanded the fool, "or we shall be heard ; and let every man put an extra bullet in his gun. Now, I'm going to the owl king's nest to see if the old bird is on."

He then turned up a huge pile of leaves, and drawing forth an enormous gun, together with a knapsack, exclaimed, —

"O, yes ; here is the old owl king himself. Some," said he, addressing the gun, "call you queen's arm ; but your right name is owl king."

So saying, he ran his hand into the leaves again, and, drawing out a horse pistol, exclaimed, —

"Aha ! hatched, have you ? Well, I'll put this young owl into my pocket to scare the chickens with ; and, besides, there is a bone there which you can pick till you can git some Hingin flesh. Now," said he, as he hit the old gun a tremendous blow with his hand, "remember it takes twelve Hingins for your breakfast to-morrow morning ; and, with what little I can do for you, you must catch your own food to-night. Twelve, and nothing short, remember. The old guard is one ; the two Hingins in the

hawk's tail who pushed the young white Christian back into prison so roughly will make three ; Tom Noble and Occum five ; that Hingin gal that throwed the noggin of water on to my head is six ; and the other six I will point you to when we get there. You know one of them yourself ; for you saw him jerk me by the shoulder the other day when I was practising on the flute."

He then turned to the officers and asked, —

" Who will go down with me into the village and see what the Hingins are about ? "

" I ! " responded all the officers in a breath.

" No, no, " said the fool ; " not so many. You will see enough after we have been down and given them a sly peep. For one, I've seen too much already, and that's the reason why I keeps this eye bound up. I see enough with one eye."

The fool then selected Major Rogers and Captain Waldron, and, telling the others to lie close upon the ground until he returned, started for the village.

It was dark, and the wigwams were all lighted up with greater brilliancy than Foolhandy had ever before seen them. A loud noise was now heard coming from the great council lodge ; and the fool, on going near the lodge, ascertained that the great dance was going on which he had heard the Indians say was to be given on the recovery of Peeroon, and in honor of his victory over the great Wampatuck, the chief of the Adirondaks. On approaching and peeping through the crevices of the lodge, they saw Titigaw and Peeroon, with their women, dancing " the Indianese " in the most approved style, surrounded by a host of admiring savages.

" It is just the time and just the hour, " said the fool ; " and we haven't got here a minute too soon ; for they will be sure to slaughter some of the English in honor of this great carousal."

"We have not a moment to spare," said Waldron; "and now show us the prison where the captives are confined."

"Tis out of sight," said the fool, "over the hill and among the willows by the river's side. You cannot see it until you are right upon it, and it is watched by a strong guard. My plan — if a fool can have a plan — is, to make the attack upon the great lodge where they are dancing, and thus draw off the attention of the guard, while I, as I know the weak door of the prison, with some ten or a dozen good fellows, will cut round and break into the prison and liberate the captives."

"I fear," said Waldron, "that ere this could be done the guard would rush in and kill them."

"Old owl king," replied Foolhandy, "will attend to him, never you fear."

"It is the only way, I really believe," returned Rogers; "and, for one, I consent to it."

"So do I," said Waldron; "so now for the woods."

They now returned to their companions and announced the plan of attack, which met the approval of the entire company, who were impatient to be led to the fray.

"We must all make the attack in a body upon the great lodge first," said the fool, "and cut down all we can as the Hingins rush out, and then a dozen of you who will keep by me will be led to the prison to liberate the captives; and the other soldiers must fight until the last red-skin drops or he is dropped himself."

"Soldiers," cried Rogers, "are you ready?"

"All ready!" responded the soldiers.

"Forward!" commanded Rogers; and in a few minutes the brave band stood before the great lodge, with their guns cocked and bayonets bristling and gleaming in the brilliant glare of light from the windows.

"Let the first platoon," cried Rogers, "level their guns

at the windows, and the rest of you reserve your fire until the savages rush out. Ready — aim — fire!” and as the heavily-charged guns rang through the night air the lodge was pierced and shattered by a hundred balls, and a row of Indians at each window fell dead upon the floor. The others rushed out, and the dreadful onslaught commenced. The Indians had no time to procure their arms, and were mown down by scores at every discharge of the guns of the English.

At the first report of the guns in the village the English prisoners sprang to their feet, and Rozella cried out, —

“Lift up your heads ; for the time of our deliverance has come.”

As quick as thought Owega caught up every article of clothing on which she could lay hands, and, with the assistance of the others, dragged the sheep from the other room, and, dressing them in the garments, shawls, blankets, and bonnets she had collected, fastened some of them upon the benches around the room, and others in an upright position to the posts of the cabin. This done, they all retired into the room formerly occupied by the sheep and awaited the result. As yet they could only conjecture the nature of the attack, and were fearful that, in case it was made by their friends, they would be ignorant of the location of their prison, and consequently unable to find it. While thus trembling and wavering between hope and fear, Rozella fancied she heard a sound in the air above the lodge like the flapping of wings, and, looking through an open space or ventilator over the door, what was her joy to behold, thrust through and waving in the evening air, the same glorious banner she had presented to the Mountain Rangers when they left for Cape Breton, with the same significant motto, “Nil desperandum, Christo duce,” shining upon its silken folds ! She sprang and

caught the staff with such violence as to wrench it from the hand of Walcott, who had elevated it to the aperture of the lodge, and, drawing it in, pressed it in speechless joy to her bosom. She had barely time to regain her seat when the door of the apartment in which the metamorphosed sheep were tied was forced open, and several Indians, with old Titigaw at their head, rushed in, knife in hand. As the room was quite dark, and the savages were too hardly pressed to stop for a very critical examination of the supposed captives, now dimly visible before them, each savage thrust his long knife into the tender bosoms of the poor sheep, killing some and only cutting the bonds of others, among the last of which was the old horned patriarch of the flock, who, not relishing this uncaMed-for attack, replied by a "rebutter," which laid old Titigaw and one or two others upon the floor. The "outside barbarians," who pressed forward to get a sight at the proceedings within, were kept in check, and finally compelled to retreat, by the glaring eyes and tremendous howls of the enchanted wolf, (for Owega had carried her robe along,) and the next minute, and before the prostrate savages within could regain their feet, Foolhandy, Waldron, Walcott, and English rushed in and despatched the Indians upon the floor. Then came the rush of long-parted friends to each other's embrace, while the welkin rang with triumphant shouts of joy and rejoicing. Waldron clasped his idolized Rozella in his arms; Walcott seized his long-sought Elsie; Gridley enclosed Mrs. Langdell and the Tufton girls in one fervid embrace; while the good squire threw his arms around Mr. Tufton and went into one of the real old-fashioned shuffles with such zeal and spirit that his shoe buckles flew one way and his knee buckles the other, all giving way together. Owega, still in her wolfskin, was capering about the room and howling for joy.

"Attention!" cried the fool in a tone of authority; and as Owega came out of her wolfskin he tore the bandage from his eye; and there stood the identical Comical Plump whom they had kicked out of their company at the Buck's Horn Inn and left upon the stone by the side of the road! The soldiers, letting their joy overcome their shame, all bounded forward and greeted him warmly as the hero of the day; and Rozella now recognized him as Silas Dustin, one of her former neighbors, and a brother of the poor blind Sarah whom she used so often to assist and comfort in her many afflictions.

"I told you," said Comical Plump, "that I could see as far as any of you if my eyes were not so handsome."

"And I," said George English, "told you, in my ghost story in the woods, there was a little rusty key which the soldiers kicked from their midst, and which said that it could turn as large a bolt as a longer one and let you into the mysteries of your idol and ideal charmers. This, gentlemen," said he, pointing to Dustin, "is the key; and I submit it to yourselves if he has not turned the bolt handsomely. The rest of the ghost story," said English, "you will now understand; for Benefice Castle stands not in Old, but in New England."

"But the mysterious lady!" cried Gridley, wildly. "If the bolt is turned and the mystery unlocked, where is she?"

English and Dustin flew through the other room to the door, and in bounded the beautiful ideal of Grizzly Gridley, holding in her hand the same little silver candlestick, and looking more charmingly than ever.

Gridley staggered and shouted at the top of his voice, and, quite beside himself with joy, bounded forward and clasped her in his arms as his hat fell to the floor.

"O!" shouted both Squire Langdell and Mr. Tufton, as they staggered forward faint with excitement.

"My daughter Georgietta!" said the squire, as he caught her in his arms.

"My long-lost son!" at the same time shouted Mr. Tufton, as he caught Gridley around the neck. "I know him by his spotted hair, more beautiful than a starry leopard from the sky."

"My dear daughter!" "My only sister!" hysterically laughed Mrs. Langdell and Rozella, as they flew and caught Georgietta in their arms; and Elsie, with her younger sisters, fell upon the bosom of Gridley and embraced him as their long-lost brother, of whose sad fate their father had so frequently and tenderly reminded them.

As Mr. Tufton spoke of Gridley's hair, Rozella looked and knew him as the one whom the reader may recollect as the bright lad of some sixteen summers who was formerly servant to the French priest at Norridgewock, and who was liberated with the other captives at that battle and went with the soldiers to Maine under Harmon and Moulton.

"You once said," remarked English to Gridley, "if you could hear the mysterious lady say, 'Gridley, I am thine!' you would fight through grizzly bears to hear it."

"Yes," replied Gridley; "and I say so now."

"Then," said Georgietta, "with my parents' consent, I am thine."

They both bowed their approval, and all raised their eyes to heaven in gratitude.

Wiley Walcott now for the first time found opportunity to address her of whom he had dreamed so long, and flew to Elsie, and, with his heart overflowing with love, said,—

"Miss Tufton, I have suffered long and toiled hard to gain the ideal of my heart. Will you be mine?"

Elsie modestly blushed "Ye —;" but before she could finish that short word her eyes met with others which she thought she must have seen before; and as she glanced over the lineaments of a once familiar face, now standing boldly out from the paint and beard of George English,—

who raised his hat, when his locks dropped from beneath it, rolled in pink papers, — there stood revealed the identical Charles Cutts, just as she had left him on the evening of the great massacre at the Cocheco garrisons!

"Ghosts and love snarls!" shouted Comical Plump, as Elsie sprang from the grasp of Walcott and bounded into the arms of her own, and as all save Plump and Georgietta supposed dead, Charles Cutts.

She was faint and senseless; but English, *alias* Cutts, and Plump had expected this result, and were provided with restoratives, the application of which soon brought her to herself again, the happiest of the happy ransomed band.

But Walcott sank upon the ground with the keen shaft of disappointment rankling in his heart, which was not so easily extracted, though a reaction soon took place; for he knew above all men Cutts's title stood recorded preëminent.

A noise was now heard behind the astonished band; and, on looking around, there were Comical Plump and Owega arm in arm and dancing about the room.

"All the officers," cried Plump, "in love with ghosts and shadows; and Major Plump with the handsome spirit Owega, the mysterious Queen of the Mountains."

"Admiral," said the squire, "he deserves her."

The whole company now fell upon their knees and returned thanks to Heaven for their safe deliverance and happy reunion after so long and painful a separation.

As they arose, "Now," said Comical Plump, "the old owl king has picked up his twelve Hingins for his breakfast; and we must rejoin our companions in arms at his nest, where we left our packs, or the savages may rally and give us trouble."

At the word all started arm in arm, and happy, save poor Walcott, who followed with his head down, dragging his banner, and left the lone hut among the willows the only

auditor to listen to the wild autumnal dirge that the winds of heaven whistled through their drooping branches.

After the company of the rescued with the soldiers had arrived at the owl king's nest all gathered around the glimmering camp fire, which tossed its dim blaze fitfully among the trees. All looked wild, and moved restlessly, and spoke nervously.

"Where is Comical Plump?" asked the squire.

But no one could answer. Still he was nowhere to be found.

"Friends," said the squire, "this is a mysterious affair after all."

"Indeed it is," replied Elsie Tufton, as she drew her arm from that of Charles Cutts and glared wildly into his face.

"He was fairly dead," said Rozella. And all moved from him to the opposite side of the camp, and turned and looked at him, and imagined his face looked cloudy and dark through the dancing blaze.

"Friends," said Mr. Tufton, "this is a dream—all a dream."

"It must be," responded tremblingly all the ransomed captives.

A loud noise was now heard outside the ring, and Comical Plump replied,—

"Yes, a dream; and you all now see the nightmare," as he hit her a smart rap, and Chocorua's old white horse the Indians had taken from Laconia bounded into the ring, and all gave a wild scream, which ended in one of Plump's ringing laughs, given so heartily it brought them all to their senses again.

"Now, then," said the squire, "we must have an explanation; for you have been talking about unlocking the mysteries, and you have thrust all the captives through the same strange door into the mysterious cells from which

you have emerged. Charles Cutts," continued the squire, "what right have you to be alive, and why are you and Georgietta here? The one we thought well dead, and the other thousands of miles away across the deep, blue sea."

"'Tis the very question," said Cutts, "I am as anxious to answer as you are to hear answered. Friends," said Cutts, "I suppose the most mysterious thing about me is my hair." And at the same time he raised his hat again and took off a large wig and held in his hand. "This," said he, "is the same hair that Elsie Tufton rolled in the pink papers the night of the great massacre at Cocheco. It was that night, to be sure, so completely bathed and clotted in my own blood it would have tasked a cooler brain than Miss Elsie's to have distinguished it from my own scalp. A disease of my natural scalp had taken off my own hair, for which I substituted this. And a good substitute it proved ; for it saved my life when the handsome crossbreed secured the scalp. It was left in the garrison after Elsie's insanity, from which it was carried to her father's house, where Dustin found it, and may relate its history after it fell into his hands ; for I had not seen it since until this very night. After reaction commenced from the dreadful wounds," continued Cutts, "I received at the garrison, I was claimed by Squando as a substitute for his child which the English had destroyed by upsetting the canoe in the Saco, in which his squaw was carrying it. As soon as I could walk I was taken to the St. Croix and kept as a prisoner until I finally made my escape and arrived in Laconia just as the Rangers were recruiting for this expedition. I fortunately came across Dustin, with whom I had a long interview, and learned the whole history and fate of my friends. I proceeded to Boston and had also an interview with General Amherst, became the bearer of the despatch

to the Mountain Rangers, joined their company ; and here, friends," said Cutts, with a low bow, "I am, your humble servant, Charles Cutts."

All now turned to Georgietta, who thus addressed them :—

"I came to America," said she, "dear father, in obedience to your summons. I reached your house, which I named Benefice Castle, the night the soldiers returned from the Cape Breton expedition, and drove out the plot of fortune tellers which had congregated there."

"Horror!" interrupted Rozella.

"So I said at the time," replied Captain Waldron.

"I know you did," continued Georgietta, "and some other things you might not wish me to repeat."

"Certainly," blushed the captain ; "skip the hard words."

"I will," said Georgietta, "and the soft ones too. I passed the night at the old castle, but went not to bed nor to sleep. When I passed out broken hearted next morning I also saw Silas Dustin, looking at the old house, to whom I made myself known and unbosomed all my sorrows. He took me to his mother's, where I stopped with blind Sarah and with old Mrs. Emond, and thought not of coming to escort you home until Plump returned after having been expelled from the Mountain Rangers. He was determined to come alone ; which all, even old Mrs. Emond, advised him to do. From that moment I was resolved to accompany him, to meet my dear parents and sister at their recapture, or share their fate if the expedition should fail. I have a comfortable bow house over the hills, between the high rocks, where no Indian's eye could ever detect me, where I have dwelt with safety, awaiting this happy hour of your deliverance. As the soldiers started from owl king's nest, I was near ; for Plump gave me the signal as the soldiers passed, and I

followed down the bank of the river as Dustin had previously directed me, to enter the prison after the soldiers and be in at the great jubilee, as I was enabled to do."

"Now," said Comical Plump, "I have not much to say about the mysterious scalp since it came into my possession. It has done me good service ; and the blood that poisoned Tom Noble at the time he secured it was obtained from the wild cherries in the forest."

All now declared the mysteries satisfactorily explained. The guard was set and the tired soldiers slept.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

VISIT TO THE BATTLE GROUND. — COMICAL PLUMP'S NOTIONS RESPECTING FIGHTING.

THE next morning following the dreadful as well as joyful scenes related in our last chapter, the Mountain Rangers, as they returned to the village to view the extent of their night's butchery, beheld for the first time the waving scalps of the murdered English, still suspended upon poles around the lodges, where they had been hung by the bloody savages on their return from the massacre of Fort William Henry. And, although the sun rose as brightly and majestically as ever, its cheering rays, as they fell upon the village of St. Francis, were not greeted by the joyous tenants who were wont at morning's dawn to come forth and welcome his gladdening beams; but they fell upon such a mass of piled and mangled corpses which had fallen in one short night before the swift shaft of death as would be hard to parallel upon the broad continent of America. As the soldiers gazed upon the hideous spectacle, their hearts reproved them for having done such inhuman work; and many a rough, stern bosom heaved a sigh of regret as he surveyed the heaps of the slain and felt the keen barbs of remorse rankling in his inmost heart. But what less could he have done, when all that was dear to a soldier's heart — yea, dearer than life itself — was pining in hopeless captivity, and subject,

at the passing caprice or passion of their savage captors, to be dragged out to cruel tortures and a lingering death?

"I may reason as a fool," cried Comical Plump, "and after the fashion of the world; but to me the whole system of war and bloodshed is wrong and of the devil, and had its origin in the lowest pit of darkness, where the great commander-in-chief holds his 'grand marquée;' and all the instruments of death, not excepting even the old owl king, who picked off his dozen Hingins for breakfast, are but the tools with which he works in his efforts to keep back the progress of the law of love, which should, ere this, have leavened the whole mass of humanity, not excepting even that hard, cold lump—an Indian's heart. O, when I lay this head upon its last, dusty pillow, let no monument or shaft, with the words, 'Here lies a hero,' inscribed upon it, rise above me. Sooner let the spot be unknown and uncared for, and the tangled wild brier and sweet fern overshadow it, or the creeping evergreen weave a green mantle of charity over a heart that, with all its failings, had never refused to move in pity for others' woes. Ay, if in the hollow of this fat, freckled hand," continued Plump, as he held it out over the ghastly corpse of an Indian warrior, "in the morning of the resurrection, should be found one pearly teardrop from the eye of one whose griefs I had assuaged or whose woes I had lightened, I should be prouder than though all the glittering diadems of earth's mightiest conquerors were lying in my grasp. And whoever prays for the success of an invading army virtually asks the great Father of all to assist one portion of his children to kill and murder another."

"And therefore," said Captain Waldron, "Major Comical Plump, the originator and leader of the late bloody attack, would fold his arms in listless inaction, and even

lose his own life, while his nearest and dearest friends were butchered before his eyes, rather than strike a blow for their defence."

"I have already said," replied Plump, "that it was a fool's reasoning, at least in the estimation of the world; but I also said the whole system was wrong; and I think so still. Now, if you will only look back to the time when the garrisons at Cocheco were first attacked, you will see that one murder has led to hundreds of others; and thus, by doing wrong ourselves, we make our brother to offend; and, for one, when I get home, I shall put old owl king carefully away where he can do no further mischief; for, if meat maketh my brother's gun to offend, mine shall taste no more flesh while the world stands. Look, now, upon this lifeless body, with the little stars and half moons of mica, or isinglass, so tastefully fastened in her hair! She it was who, in the first flush and glow of youth and beauty, came to the musical call of her Indian lover, Occum, as he warbled his simple love notes to the evening air. Those eyes, now so dim and lustreless, were then liquid with love's fond tenderness and outvied the stars in their flashing brilliancy; and that bounding heart, through which the warm blood of kindling affection poured its thrilling tide, is stilled at the very height of its overflowing bliss."

"Yes," sighed Rozella, as she approached the spot; "she was the same kind young squaw who invited me to go to the boat ride, and whose skilful hand made the little canoe skip and dance over the waves with as imperceptible a wake as that left by a swallow as he dips his light wing in the placid waters; and she it was who, with her companions, presented me the fish and wished us so much happiness. And how have we repaid them? I almost wish we had died in captivity rather than that they should have perished."

“And here, too,” said Plump, “is poor Occum, her lover, lying by her side, faithful even unto death. His fingers will never govern the stops of that sweet flute again ; but I hope they may one day wake a more heavenly harmony as they sweep the thrilling wires of harps immortal. Here, too, lies Tom Noble, who also was one of the victims of the great owl king.”

They were here advised by Captain Waldron, and all returned to old owl king's nest ; and the same day, that is, the day succeeding the attack upon St. Francis, the soldiers and their friends departed for Laconia.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

DEPARTURE FROM ST. FRANCIS FOR LACONIA. — SKIRMISH WITH THE INDIANS AND OTHER INCIDENTS BY THE WAYSIDE. — THEY LEAVE FOR HOME. — CHARLES CUTTS AND ELSIE TUFTON'S ROUTE.

"THERE are some signs about the forests and in the vicinity of the Indian village," said Major Rogers, as he arose from his breakfast, "that induce me to think that more Indians have escaped than we at first supposed. At any rate, I think we had better be on our homeward march as soon as possible."

"I am of the same opinion," replied Captain Waldron ; "for I am quite sure I saw, this morning, a live redskin creeping along the shore of the river under the willows ; and there may be others similarly concealed."

The English forces were now marshalled, and, slinging their knapsacks, the order to advance was given, and they took up the line of march for their distant homes. For the first two days the whole company were to keep the same route by which they had come, and then Major Rogers and the brave soldiers who had joined the Mountain Rangers at Crown Point were to leave them and proceed to Number Four. As they advanced at as rapid a pace as was consistent with the powers of endurance of the female part of their band, they were surprised at finding that Marine Lee and Comical Plump were again missing. The company halted for a moment to consult whether it was

not advisable to return for them ; but on Lieutenant Gridley's suggesting that, as they were doubtless aware of the advance of the company, they would soon overtake the main body, the Rangers again proceeded on their way. The path was nothing but an Indian trail, with logs and trees lying across it, and so narrow that they were obliged to go in Indian file. They had proceeded but a few miles when they heard the report of two ordinary guns directly behind them, followed by the deafening roar of the old owl king.

"Trouble there," cried Waldron.

"We shall have enough to do yet," said Major Rogers.

They kept on until they reached a little natural opening in the woods, where they halted again for consultation. Soon they were surprised at the sound of horses' feet in the path by which they had come, and in a moment Major Comical Plump swept through the bushes, minus both "hat and wig," upon Titigaw's wild horse, which he had taken from his bow house ; and close in his rear rode Marine Lee upon the horse of Squire Langdell, which the Indians took with the captives, and singing out in true nautical style, —

"Land ho ! harbor ahead !"

They had used ropes for bridles ; but one of Plump's reins had been completely severed by an Indian's bullet, shot at the time the company heard the first reports.

"How is this, Major Plump ?" cried Waldron, as Comical jumped from his horse.

"Nothing," replied Plump ; "only old owl king has been taking down another Hingin, just for a lunch."

"But," said Rozella, "I thought you said this morning, when you preached such a sermon over the poor slaughtered Indians, that old owl king should never have any more meat."

"Force of circumstances, ma'am," said Comical, blushing ; "and, besides, what I said was, that, after I got

home, I should put him away where he wouldn't do any more mischief. I supposed we should have trouble in getting through these woods, and that I should have to let the old fellow have a bite now and then. Always, between two evils, choose the least, is the rule, you know, among genteel people when they want an excuse for doing a base act. But what else could I have done? You see, the Hingin let slip at me, but only cut off one of the reins of my bridle; and even then I waited for Lee to bring him down; but when he missed him I just let old owl king drive his beak through his back, and down he went like a billet of wood. As he fell, we heard the bushes beyond him cracking with more of the red dogs; so we left without even saying 'Good by.'"

While this conversation was going on the horses were being prepared for the use of the ladies, upon which they were placed.

"Now, Major Plump," said Captain Waldron, after they had again started, "how did you know where those horses were?"

"O," replied he, "I heard them neigh one night when I was down in the village raising handsome spirits; and I wondered then what would become of the poor beasts after we had put the hostlers out of the way; but it has worked enough sight better than I feared 'twould then."

The Rangers kept directly up the river Magog until they arrived nearly to the outlet, where they found a narrow place, over which they crossed on a fallen log, while the horses swam across. As they struck the eastern shore of the lake and advanced along its borders, all hoped that they were now safe from further molestation from the Indians, whom they were confident were rallying in their rear. As night approached, the tired Rangers and their wearied "recaptured captives" began to think seriously of encamping, although it was evident, from the appear-

ance and cries of the wild birds as they hovered over their track for miles back as well as over their own heads, that the Indians were on their track; and several soldiers were quite sure that in the course of the day they had heard, far in the rear, the report of a gun. The officers now searched for a spot as clear as possible from trees, and especially from underbrush, so that the Indians might not creep upon them unawares, and, having selected a spot pitched their tents for the night. Tender boughs and what grass could be found were cut up for the horses, the supper eaten in silence, and then the soldiers huddled together in little groups, while a strong guard of twenty picked men were placed at equal distances from the men whose turn to sleep came first. The wolves were howling as usual through the forest, while from the lake resounded the hoarse cry of the great loon; but the stars twinkled hopefully in the serene night air, and the new moon, with its white rim, shone like an ornament of silver inlaid in the blue groundwork of the azure sky.

Squire Langdell then called upon his daughter Georgietta to again repeat the mysterious history of her life since he left her in England.

She complied with the request; and as she finished, the soldiers, forgetting the imminent dangers to which they were exposed, now gave three cheers for the heroic Georgietta Langdell; and their echoes hardly died away ere they were answered by the rattling volley of the guns of the Indians, whose bullets cut the branches of the trees above their heads, which fell in the midst of the group of women beneath.

The little rim of the moon, which had, until then, been peeping out to show the world a sample of the light waves of the sky, had now drawn in her horns and retired over the western hills, leaving the woods with all their dangers in complete darkness. Two or three of the guard had

fallen ; but the soldiers rushed bravely to the spot whence the firing proceeded, and the fight commenced on both sides. A few of both parties fell at the first onset ; but it was soon evident from the scattering fire of the savages that there were not enough of the enemy to cause the English to fear a very bloody battle, but just enough to annoy them as they dodged from tree to tree and fired therefrom. The soldiers kept pressing upon them, and every redskin whose dark shadow could be seen flitting from one covert to another was sure to drop before their unerring aim. They had now driven the enemy far back into the forest ; and from the volleys coming from one quarter, where stood an enormous tree, they concluded that a number of the savages were concealed there. While they were planning how to dislodge them, and wondering if Comical Plump, whom they had not seen since the fight commenced, had at last turned coward and run away, they heard the well-known war whoop of the old owl king ring through the woods, and the buck shot seemed to cut a clean swath through the bushes in front of them, and four swarthy savages of the number behind the great tree fell dead upon the ground. The remaining savages, finding that the old owl king was in their very midst, bounded away in hot haste, but not before the "young 'un," who had been picking the bone in Comical's pocket long enough, had caught sight of live flesh in the shape of a tall savage and sent his little beak directly through his brain.

"Half enough," cried Comical, as he emerged from his ambush, "for a breakfast to-morrow morning."

But the Indians had now become panic struck, and, giving one wild yell, leaped from their coverts and fled.

"Another sermon upon your peace principles, Major Plump," cried Rozella, as the little crosseyed chap entered the crowd which had collected around the women.

"Force of circumstances," again replied Plump. "You

know, 'Zella, that we preachers have to keep in the good graces of the world as well as other folks, and sometimes have to preach one way and shoot another. Besides, I have not got home yet ; but when I do get where there are no rich and influential members in my congregation whose tender corns oblige me to tread softly and gingerly, and to avoid treading on which I almost have to take to the gutter myself, then I shall plough a straight furrow, no mistake. And then you know an owl king must have flesh, and human flesh too, to eat as well as other kings ; for any throne would come into contempt at once and crumble to dust were it not fed and fattened on blood."

"Tut, tut, young man," growled the old squire ; " what is that you are saying, sir ? "

"When I get home," resumed Plump, "my old king will abdicate the throne in favor of the people, and will nevermore eat flesh or drink blood except in their defence."

"Gentlemen," said the squire, "this language is symbolical, metaphorical, and mysterious ; and I should like to know if much of this unloyal talk has been current since I left Laconia, or if any man with a sound head on his shoulders even thinks of turning rebel to the good old king or his cause."

"I sha'n't rebel," answered Plump, "unless the old owl king smells human flesh in that direction. Heigho !" And over he tipped for the night's rest, and all but the guard soon followed his example.

The day succeeding this attack, the Rangers ascertained that their provisions were nearly exhausted ; and as they now feared no further annoyance from the Indians, and as they must necessarily soon take different directions in order to reach their several homes, it was thought best to separate, especially as the different companies would thereby be enabled to procure more game, on which they would be obliged mainly to depend, than it was possible

to do while together. Therefore Major Rogers and his men struck off towards the great bend of the Connecticut, while most of the Rangers and their recaptured friends were to cross the upper branch of the same river. But Charles Cutts and Elsie Tufton, with a few others, directed their course to the head waters of the Upper Ammonoosuc, intending to pass through the Crystal Hills to their home by the east side of Lake Winnipiseogee. They therefore, with a hearty shake of the hand, bade each other a warm good by and struck off in their several routes. As there were no paths, they were guided in their course by the sun and the small streams which they knew must lead to the Connecticut.

They still kept their horses; but so thick were the wild vines and bushes that much of the way it was impossible to ride; and, as the women were consequently obliged to walk, their progress was slower than it otherwise would have been. They met with no game of any magnitude during the day, and had only killed a few wild birds, as their numbers and the noise they made upon the dry sticks and leaves frightened away all the larger game ere they got within shooting distance. Owega had easily kept up with the company, and had found ample time to collect nuts and roots, to the use of which she was more accustomed than the others, and of which she offered a portion to her companions. Night now set in; and the soldiers, weary, worn, and discouraged, with starvation staring them full in the face and a long and tedious journey through trackless forests and over towering mountains before them, prepared to encamp. After the camp fires were kindled, some of the company busied themselves in digging roots and gathering nuts, and others in collecting plants and tender shrubs for the horses. The logs they had piled upon the fires had scarcely been reduced to coals when the stunning report of the owl king

came booming through the night air, far away in the gloomy woods ; and all hearts leaped with hope that the bird which had never yet been known to fail had brought down some animal of sufficient size to afford them a plentiful repast. Some of the men started in the direction whence the report came, and ere long returned, bearing a fat buck, slain by the faithful owl king. His hide was speedily stripped off, and the juicy steak was soon broiled upon the glowing coals and despatched with a relish which needed not the aid of sauce or other condiment. A hearty repast was followed by a dessert of the nuts which had been collected ; and, on the whole, they made a very substantial and nourishing meal.

“Now,” said Squire Langdell, as he rose from his supper, “as Georgietta gave a short account of herself last evening, I should like this evening to hear from him whom you call Comical Plump. It is true, he has some erroneous ideas about kings, &c., which I doubt not he will outgrow as he gets older ; but he shoots straight, and talks straight too, though unfortunately he sometimes talks one way and shoots the other.”

“All owing to the force of circumstances,” replied Major Plump, and then related to the squire his adventures, with the most of which our readers are already familiar, and which we will not repeat.

His name, however, he said, was Silas Dustin, and he lived on the north road, about two miles from the squire’s house.

“Indeed !” said the squire. “Then I know your family.”

“Certainly,” replied Plump ; “and I have been at your house after milk, flour, and potatoes often enough to make you know me.”

The good squire now clapped his hand over Plump’s mouth and cried out, “Don’t mention that ; you have repaid me a thousand fold ; and, if I had all the corn that

ever was in the cribs of old Egypt, it should be yours in welcome."

"I don't wonder, squire," continued Plump, "that you don't remember me; for I was then a little towheaded, freckled-faced, crosseyed chap; and I am so tanned now that I am all of a piece, and no mistake. Still it was the kindness of yourself and family to our family that has made me what I am to-day or ever expect to be; and to that guardian angel, Rozella, in particular, do we owe our very lives. After you were carried off by the Indians I could not sleep for a long time any more than though I was on a bed of hot embers; and poor blind Sarah, to whom Rozella used to bring so many presents, walked the house night and day, wringing her hands, and crying until her face was nearly blistered; and some nights she would feel her way along to my bedside, and, waking me, would sit for hours planning ways and means for your deliverance. And she was anxious that I should start alone; but mother knew the Indians too well for that, and said that would never do, for I could effect nothing, and might lose my own life in the attempt. But when the Mountain Rangers returned and the day of their departure for Canada was fixed, how glad did Sarah and mother and old Mrs. Emond feel! Sarah, and Georgietta, who was stopping with us, clapped their hands and jumped up almost to the ceiling, and they all flew round like mad and fixed up my things; and Sarah, who can't see whether the sun shines or not, made my shirts and knapsack; and that dark, foggy morning that I left for the rendezvous, old Mrs. Emond came all the way over to our house to see me start, and, putting her trembling old hand on my head just as she used to on Rozella's, gave me her blessing. I started off in real good spirits, not knowing but what I was as good a soldier as any of 'em, until I got to the Buck's Horn Inn, when the soldiers laughed in my face and voted me out of the company."

"Shame! shame!" cried the squire, as his eyes flushed with indignation.

"Can it be possible?" asked Rozella, in great surprise.

"Captain Waldron," said the squire, "how is this?"

All now looked around to where the officers had been standing; but not a man of them was in sight. They had all sneaked off into the bushes.

"Is this so, Mr. Lee?" asked the squire, in a severe tone.

"Even so," replied Lee; "but I assure you no one of the company ought to be blamed; for we acted conscientiously, supposing him to be some wilful boy who had come to join the soldiers without counting the cost, and that to refuse him admittance would not only be a great favor to his mother, but a still greater one to himself. And I stand in for all the blame or censure; for we knew nothing of him or of his friendship for your family; and we were all taken by surprise when Foolhandy threw off his disguise and came up Comical Plump."

"I have not blamed any one," returned Plump. "I was only telling the squire how the thing happened."

Upon this the officers gained sufficient courage to come out from their retreat, and the squire directed Plump to proceed.

"You know, squire," resumed he, "that the best Christian may sometimes have a spark of infidelity snap into his brain; but if he snaps it out again before it has time to burn, there may be little harm done. He may be just as good a Christian as before, and, it may be, better and more watchful. A true patriot, too, may get a flash of treason in his mind when his own side abuse him badly; and like enough it was something of this sort of feeling which got into me as I sat on the stone opposite the Buck's Horn Inn; but it wasn't the stone of repentance, any how.

While I sat there, the thought of you and Rozella, and all you had done for me and Sarah, would have driven treason out of the rock itself; and I then planned the whole expedition exactly as it has turned out. But I thought before I started I would return home and tell my poor mother what a promising son she had raised and what a pet the soldiers made of him. When I reached home, I found all our folks on their knees praying for my success and the speedy return of the Langdells.

“‘Yes, mother,’ said I, ‘I have been so successful that the Rangers have voted me out of their company, and would not let me be even a dog for them.’

“They all rose to their feet as I said this, and Sarah commenced crying. Mrs. Emond then said, —

“‘Don’t be disheartened, Silas; you know that the stone which the builders rejected, the same became the head of the corner.’

“‘Yes,’ said I; ‘but that stone was a peace, and not a war, maker.’

“‘But,’ replied she, ‘was He not willing to lay down his life for his people? Now, don’t stop to preach, Silas, for practice is a great deal better; and, if I were you, I would go, if I had to go alone. And my blessing shall go with you and my prayers follow you.’

“I told her that was what I had decided to do. So I went up stairs and got Cutts’s scalp, which I found in the garrison, and put in my knapsack. When I came down, Georgietta had decided to accompany me. She was all ready for the start, and would take no denial. So we bade them good by and started. We passed through the very spot where we now are; and though I don’t like to shoot any thing of the female gender, I shot the wife of Mr. Buck, whose flesh you have just been tasting, when we got here, and so knew pretty well where to find him on

my return. We kept our course sometimes by the sun and sometimes by the trees. There is much more moss on the north side of a tree, and it is also longer and greener, than on the south side. Besides, where the trees are thick, the limbs are generally larger on the south side. Away up by the lake we met the Indians; but I had time to get my scalp out and turn fool (as I didn't have to alter my looks much) before they saw me. Georgietta was far behind; they did not see her; and my taking the character of a fool worked to a charm with the Indians, who hold fools in the most superstitious reverence. And in this character, when I arrived at St. Francis, I soon found out in what wigwam you were kept by devising a plan to make the savages bring out Rozella to heal Tom Noble."

"Why, Comical Plump!" cried Rozella, in astonishment. "Was that you I saw when Occum made me put my hand on Noble's brow that he might be healed?"

"'Twasn't any body else," replied Plump, laughing.

"Well," rejoined Rozella, "I must confess that at that time I thought you the greatest fool I had ever seen."

"But Noble was a greater one," replied Plump, "and the scheme worked admirably. The rest of my history you all know, or at least the soldiers, who may relate it if they choose, for I am too tired to talk any more to-night. Heighho!" And in a moment Plump was sound asleep.

"A wonderful fellow, that Comical Plump," said Squire Langdell, as the sound of his snoring reached his ears.

"Indeed he is," replied Captain Waldron; "and we were all so ashamed of our conduct towards him that we did not like to mention the matter to you. But Lee has stated it in its true light, and our greatest fault was a lack of judgment in appreciating a man's true character. But we have talked the matter over, and have come to the

unanimous conclusion never to prejudge another man by the greater and lesser number of inches his head reaches in the air, the number of freckles his face or hands have acquired in working in the hot sun to support a poor mother and a blind sister, or the crossing of the line of vision of one eye over that of the other."

CHAPTER XL.

THE MOUNTAIN RANGERS AND CAPTIVES REACH WINNIPISEOGEE LAKE.
— DEPRESSION OF SPIRITS IN CONSEQUENCE OF CUTTS AND ELSIE'S
ABSENCE. — HOME AGAIN. — WEDDING OF BRITTON WALDRON AND
ROZELLA LANGDELL.

It was nearly December ; but the autumn had been remarkably mild and pleasant, and winter had delayed his coming until a period later than for several previous years. Most of the little band of Rangers, and the inestimable prizes they had so gallantly recaptured, had, after much suffering, deprivation, and almost starvation, reached the head of Lake Winnipiseogee, in the vicinity of the long-left and long-loved Laconia. Most of the Rangers encamped here for the night ; but some pressed forward to reach their homes. As the camp fires began to blaze, "Now," cried Rozella, "is our mourning changed to rejoicing, although we are worn and weary. How happy we should be, Mr. Tufton, could we now meet dear Elsie and Charles Cutts, who were to come by the way of the Ammonoosuc, and all march into old Laconia together !"

Mr. Tufton sighed deeply, but spoke not a word ; and his two younger daughters wiped their eyes, revealing at once the depths of their feelings and their fears. The company, during the day, had passed some few houses, where they had procured a small quantity of food, but which formed but a light and unsubstantial supper. Those soldiers who had reached their homes by a forced march,

among whom were Comical Plump and Marine Lee, had rallied the settlers, who had immediately got together all the horses and provisions they could lay their hands on and went out to meet the Rangers with songs of joy and rejoicing. The women of Laconia, on hearing the joyful news of the near approach of their friends and neighbors, convened at the house of Squire Langdell and gave it a thorough cleansing from garret to cellar. Every one had also brought a liberal portion of the best she had in her possession with which to feed and clothe the destitute and famishing ones, who had once performed the like office for them. And every body was anxious to be there, to give them a most cordial and affectionate greeting ; and even old Mrs. Emond and blind Sarah could not be persuaded by Comical Plump to stay at home, but, killing and dressing their fattest chickens, had plodded their way there, and were now sitting by the old garden gate, out of the way of the working women, to await the expected arrival.

Plump and Lee had, in the mean time, returned to the vicinity of Merry Meeting to meet their comrades and return again with them. As from an eminence they saw the lake, Lee observed, "How much misery, wretchedness, and death one vile person may cause !"

"Of whom do you speak ?" asked Plump.

"The old scow boat," replied Lee.

"Hush !" cried Plump. "Leave her to her own reflections. She will have enough to grapple with ; though I fear she will ride the waves for many a day before she is permitted to go down."

"She won't be very likely to ride in the direction of Laconia," replied Lee ; "for, if she does, she knows her destiny."

Their companions now hove in sight, much rejoiced to see Plump and Lee and hear from their friends, although they had been separated only for a night. All now marched on together ; and as preparations had been made

for a grand reception supper at the house of Squire Langdell, all proceeded directly there before going to their several homes. Before they reached the house, the Rangers paraded in military order and marched in front of the recaptured Laconians. Plump was invited to march with the company; but it was his turn now, and he refused to do so.

"Right," cried the old squire, as he overheard the refusal. "I like the young man's grit, and he shall march at the head of our own little band."

"I shall be most happy to do so," replied Plump, as he took the proffered position. As they neared the house, the Rangers formed two parallel lines, between which the little captive band, with Plump at their head, marched proudly into their old home. Tears, kisses, embraces, and shakings of the hand were now the order of the day for the next hour; and blind Sarah clapped her hands for joy; while Mrs. Emond went from one to the other, shading her eyes with her hand, and, looking in the face of each, gave them her blessing. After she had hugged and kissed Rozella about a dozen times, she said,—

"I am ready now to say, with aged Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'"

All were welcomed and treated alike, as they wished to show no partiality even if they felt any.

The supper was now smoking upon the table; and the soldiers and the captives sat down first, and all others afterwards. Squire Langdell took the head of the table, and insisted that Comical Plump should sit next upon his right. The honor he had received in marching at the head of the captives and the additional honor now conferred was duly appreciated by him, and filled the heart of his fond mother, and Mrs. Emond, and blind Sarah to overflowing. Mr. Tufton, who sat by the side of his daughters,

still and quiet as usual, was observed by Rozella, at the close of the meal, to make some remark to them ; whereupon all of them burst into tears.

"Yes," said Rozella, comprehending the nature of the remark, "I, too, wish that poor Elsie and Cutts could have some of these good things, of which we have so bountiful a supply, in their journey through the dark forests. If I knew where to find them, I would start to-morrow morning and meet them."

"Some of us must return," replied Gridley, hardly able to take his eyes for a moment off the face of Georgietta, "and see if we cannot find them ; for they may be in a starving condition, if, indeed, they are yet living."

But the settlers who had remained at home assured them that they would raise a party among themselves, as the soldiers were too worn and fatigued for so arduous an undertaking.

The company now broke up ; and the next morning a little band started in the direction they supposed Cutts and Elsie must come—which was through the pass, or notch, of the Crystal Hills.

The next day was spent by the squire in looking over his farm, with its prostrate fences and its dilapidated gates ; and he could not but mourn to see how every thing, as he said, had gone to wreck and ruin. Yet, when he would consider that he ought to be thankful that his own life and the lives of those near and dear to him had been preserved through all the sufferings and dangers of a long and terrible captivity, he speedily forgot his present grievances in the brightening prospects of the future. Waldron and Gridley, with each of the other soldiers and captives, had now gone to look after their own neglected affairs. While the squire was patching up his gates, and Marine Lee was lending him a helping hand, along came the little patriot, Major Comical Plump.

"Well," cried the squire, "how is the owl king to-day?"

"He is no king now," replied Plump; "he abdicated the throne last night, and has taken up his abode in a humble cottage and gone to roost."

"And you do not mean," said the squire, "that he shall ever eat any more flesh, do you?"

"Not unless he is compelled to do so in defence of the cause of the people in whose favor he has abdicated," replied Plump.

"Cause of a fiddlestick!" sneered the squire. "Is not the cause of the people and the cause of the good king one and the same?"

"If they are," replied Plump, "he will roost this many a day."

"Doubtless," resumed the squire, "we have the best government and the best sovereign in the world; and my prayer is, 'God save the king.'"

Plump, finding the squire was getting a little excited, walked into the house to see his charming Owega; and, as he passed, said, in a low tone,—

"If He don't save him, nothing will, if the old owl gets within whooping distance of him."

"What was that the lad muttered?" asked the squire.

"He says," replied Marine Lee, "he hopes he will; for we all need assistance from him."

"Certainly, certainly," added the squire; "the little major is a good loyal subject, and a shrewd one too; for we should all have perished in captivity if he had not come to our assistance."

"Yes," said Lee; "he is as true as the needle to the pole."

"He is a comical genius," said the squire.

"He is so," replied Lee, "and a plump one too."

In the course of the week Captain Waldron called and

informed them that he had purchased a new lot of land in the vicinity of Merry Meeting Bay, where he intended to erect a house and have it ready for occupancy by the next spring. Gridley, too, called and announced that he had commenced a new house near the log hut formerly occupied by himself and Walcott.

Thereupon Rozella and Georgietta commenced putting, not their houses, but their housekeeping articles, in order ; and the winter passed merrily save when their hearts were tortured by the anxiety they all felt for the fate of Cutts and Elsie, who, as yet, had not been heard from. The winter was cold and unusually severe, and they were fearful that the faithful couple had either perished by exposure, by the tomahawk of the cruel savage, or by starvation among the awful solitudes of the Crystal Hills. The settlers frequently called on the Tuftons and mingled their sighs and tears with theirs ; but no tidings came to relieve their aching hearts. The company which had gone in search of them returned after going as far as the great mountain pass, or notch, but had discovered no track or trace of them.

It was early spring, and the bluebird and robin had sent forth their mellow, trumpet notes, as if to call the vegetable kingdom to its resurrection ; and the gurgling streams, as they rushed foaming adown the hills of the sugar orchards, seemed to cry, as with a loud voice, "Winter shall be no more."

The lowing herds grew impatient as, through the window of their long-fastened enclosure, they saw the distant hillside throwing off its snowy vest and laying bare its broad and generous bosom to the genial sun, and inviting them to their annual feast. The sheep had left their winter folds and wound their circuitous way to the bare patches and knolls of the adjacent fields, whence they

bleated their lengthened notes of welcome to the joyous spring ; while the lambs piped cheerily their shrill, responsive treble as they frisked and gambolled from rock to rock.

But neither the note of the spring birds nor the rejoicing gush of the glad waters were half so joyous as the sweet unisons of love that ascended from the hearts of Britton Waldron and Rozella Langdell ; for it was their wedding day. They had sent for the Rev. Mr. Moody to officiate on the occasion, as no one else, in their opinion, could perform the interesting ceremony so properly and give such general satisfaction. The neighbors were all assembled in their Sunday suits, and paired off for the time as best suited them. Gridley and Georgietta and Plump and Owega were particularly happy, as were, indeed, all who were assembled, the number of whom was not small ; for, knowing as our readers do the character and disposition of Rozella, it is needless to say that the old, the lame, and the blind were all there. The company were hardly seated when the good parson entered with a cheerful smile and a low bow. Since his last settlement the parson had been so engaged in his parochial duties that, although he had frequently written Waldron and the Langdells, he had not before found time to pay them a visit. They expected, therefore, that he would keep on a formal and ministerial dignity until after the marriage ceremony, but were mistaken ; for no sooner did he enter than he rushed up to Mrs. Langdell and the squire, congratulated them on their safe return, and had just completed his salutations, accompanied by a hearty shake of the hand all around the room, when the bride and bridegroom came down. Having completed the important and interesting ceremony, he then stepped forward, and, taking the hands of the happy pair, gave them his heartiest congratulations

on their present happy relations and his warmest wishes for their future welfare and happiness.

The time was now spent in happy and cheerful conversation until dinner was announced ; after which the parson took his leave, and Mr. and Mrs. Waldron, accompanied by Gridley and Georgietta, took their departure for their new home at Merry Meeting Bay.

CHAPTER XLI.

FATE OF CHARLES CUTTS AND ELSIE TUFTON. — LITTLE BENEDICT AND
SPLIT ROCK. — ROZELLA'S NEW TROUBLE.

A SPACE of four years has elapsed since the occurrences narrated in the last chapter, and the dear old land of Laconia has gone on more prosperous than ever. The Indians had never ventured there after the capture of the Langdells and Tuftons and the consequent embargo put upon their excursions by the old owl king. Grizzly Gridley and the heroic Georgietta are now man and wife, as are also Comical Plump and the brighteyed Owega. In this interval Plump has succeeded in raising quite a party who are in favor of separating from the mother country ; and it may be that at some future day his daring and heroic deeds of valor will be recorded. The fate of the brave Charles Cutts and the lovely Elsie has also been ascertained, the details of which we will now rehearse.

After they had parted from the Mountain Rangers to seek their home by the route along the head waters of the Upper Ammonoosuc, they suffered, together with their companions, the most bitter hardships and privations, and came near perishing with hunger. They subsisted mainly upon beech nuts and hazel nuts, together with such esculent roots as they could dig on their route, and finally separated, and Cutts and Elsie went on alone.

During the previous summer a man, by the name of

Whipple, in passing from Canada to the English settlements, on arriving at the beautiful flat, or glen, some twenty-five miles north-west of the great pass, or notch, of the Crystal Hills, was so highly pleased with its wild and romantic location that he halted, and, with the assistance of two or three of his companions, erected a log house and commenced clearing the land.

Cutts and Elsie were so fortunate as to come in sight of his house, and, being faint, weary, and nearly famishing, approached and begged for food and shelter. They were not only received and their wants abundantly provided for, but a proposition was made them by Whipple to remain with him as hired help through the winter; to which, it being too late in the season to attempt crossing the mountains, they acceded.

While at supper on the day of their arrival, Whipple asked Elsie to give him her name.

"Elsie Tufton," replied she.

"Elsie — Elsie," repeated Whipple; "it is a pretty name enough; but, as I once knew a young woman to whom you bear a close resemblance and whose name was Nancy, I will, if you have no objection, while you remain here, call you by that name."

"Very well," replied she; "I am not very particular about it."

"I have been trying for a long time," responded the gallant Cutts, "to change it myself. But never mind; our prospects are better now than when we were starving in the woods."

"It will all come out straight in good time, I hope," said Whipple; "although we have no one here in these woods duly authorized to change it."

The next day, Nancy, as we will for the future call her, went about her household duties, and soon put the neglected log house in neat and comfortable trim. Her time

during the day was usually spent in doing the necessary household work, and the evenings were enlivened by the companionship of Cutts and Whipple, who told stories and sang songs by the blazing hearth fire of their rustic cabin.

Late in the fall, the men who had previously been with Whipple returned with a full supply of provisions and other necessary articles for farming ; and after winter set in they always had an abundance of fresh venison, which, to the credit of Nancy be it said, was most admirably cooked. The howl of the wolf and the low growl of the bear around their strong and secure dwelling were but as music to their ears and a gentle lullaby to soothe them to rest. And so happily had they spent the winter that, when spring came, Nancy was in no haste to leave her romantic quarters in the mountains ; for all, though wild, had now become endeared and attractive to her. And this was not surprising ; for, of all the delightful views unfolded to the admiring gaze of the mountaineer, she declared the Ammonoosuc, with its falls and rapids, was by far the most enchanting and picturesque. It starts from the fairy-like little ponds so calmly sleeping under the protecting wings of the Crystal Hills ; but when their streams come out into the world there is no more sleep to their eyes nor slumber to their eyelids, and they dash furiously along with unrestrained and giant strides. Having formed an harmonious union of liquid love, it then makes several perpendicular leaps of thirty or forty feet from cliff to cliff, and still sweeps on through its rocky channel until its whole bed is filled with boiling torrents of foam and spray. Farther down the mountain the sides of the stream become stained, colored and carpeted by variegated mosses, and their shelving brows are covered by verdant shrubs and wildwood flowers, which hang over their grotesque lids in long fringes and twining festoons

of blossoming beauty. Farther back from the shores stand the dark, heavy evergreens — the fir, the spruce, and the white pine — like ever-watchful sentinels, guarding the unculled herbarium which Nature has thrown open at their feet.

They therefore remained here, happy and lighthearted, until late in the summer, when Mr. Cutts left for his home, intending to return for Nancy in the fall, and, as soon as they reached the settlement, to be married. After his departure, being naturally of a buoyant spirit, she still continued cheerful and happy, thinking only of the time when her lover should come for her and convey her to their common home. The months rolled on, and the time appointed for his return came ; but he came not with it. She still hoped on long after the time had expired ; but at last the days grew long and wearisome to her, and the nights tedious and sleepless. Sometimes she feared that the savage beasts, then so numerous, had devoured him ; and anon the dreadful suspicion haunted and harrowed up her tender bosom that some designing damsel in the settlements might, with her artful wiles, have drawn away that heart she claimed as her own. At length, unable longer to endure the suspense and uncertainty, and as winter was just setting in, making her immediate departure necessary, in order to get through the pass ere the drifting snow should have rendered it impassable, she determined to make an attempt to reach the settlements. For days previous she had searched the woods, the caves, and even the dens of the wild beasts ; but no trace of him could she find. On the morning of her departure the snow commenced falling ; and poor Nancy saw that it was, indeed, her last chance. Hastily collecting a few articles of clothing and tying them in a handkerchief, while the tears fell as fast as the snow, she started on her perilous journey. The whole country for miles around was one unbroken

wilderness, and there was no road ; and after she bent her course so as to strike the Notch, not even a footpath was visible ; and, as there were no bridges, she was obliged to cross the streams on the trunks of fallen trees, which were slippery with sleet and snow. The difficulties and dangers of the undertaking were increased tenfold by the storm of snow, which continued until it was nearly a foot deep, while the cold grew still more biting and severe.

A few days after her departure she was found by a hunter sitting on the ground, leaning against a hemlock tree, by the side of a stream which flows through a deep chasm, lifeless and frozen. A bridge has since been erected over the chasm by the side of which she fell, which, in honor and in remembrance of this truehearted woman, is called Nancy's Bridge. It is truly a standing memorial of love, fidelity, and death. The stone upon which the bridge is laid is a beautiful specimen of trap dike. To all appearance, the trap rock was thrown up between the granite and there cooled, and in the process of time fell to pieces and was carried away by the water, leaving a vacant space between the granite walls on either side. The rapid stream which flows between these walls is also called Nancy's River, and the height of the bridge above the water is thirty feet. Here, about a quarter of a mile from where the house of Mr. Crawford now stands, perished the lovely Elsie, *alias* Nancy, who braved the terrors of the wilderness, the storm, and the cold for nearly twenty-five miles ere she fell and rested from her labors ; and here, by the side of the bounding river, was she laid in her rude and humble grave. Let whoever passes the wild and lovely spot pause and pay due reverence to her fidelity and drop a tear in remembrance of her sad fate. She had the loving heart and unswerving constancy of a true woman ; and long may her story be told with sympathy and pity. Many and bitter were Rozella's tears when she

heard of the sad fate of her dear and valued friend ; and, after the first violence of her grief had subsided, she penned the following lines as a tribute to her memory and her worth : —

“The wintry clouds are wild above ;
My scalding tears, — they burn.
Where is the dwelling of my love ?
O, when will he return ?
I’ve searched each cave for miles around,
And e’en the wild beast’s den ;
But trace nor track of him I’ve found,”
Cried Nancy of the Glen.

“Perhaps the wolves that heart have torn
That loved me aye so true,
Or else some artful maid hath borne
Away that love, my due.
The pigeon seeks her absent mate,
So doth the mountain hen :
I’ll fly, I’ll know my Charlie’s fate,”
Quoth Nancy of the Glen.

Her scanty wardrobe, all she had,
Was gathered, wild and fast ;
Through storm and beating sleet she fled,
Nor feared the driving blast.
Her track the blood left pure and warm
On rock and thorny stem,
And scenting wolves howled with the storm
For Nancy of the Glen.

To gain the pass she urged her flight
Before the setting day ;
But gathering storm and thickening night
O’ertook her on her way.
Against the tree, beside the gulf,
Far from the haunts of men,
In bitter anguish threw herself —
Poor Nancy of the Glen !

’Tis morn. Hark ! not a breath is heard ;
Nor wolf, nor hawk, I see ;
The storm howls not ; no spray is stirred ;
Yet Nancy’s by the tree.

But O, her beauteous form and eye
Were cold; and angels then,
On cherub wings, came from the sky
For Nancy of the Glen.

The heroic Charles Cutts was never heard from; but years afterwards a skeleton was found in the wilderness south of the Crystal Hills, together with the corroded and rusteaten barrel of a gun, which was pronounced by the older settlers to be similar in form and workmanship to those used by the soldiers in their expedition against the St. Francis Indians.

There is a vast rocking stone in Laconia, supposed to weigh from sixty to eighty tons, and so exactly poised or balanced that a lady's finger may move it several inches, though a hundred men could move it no farther. The cause of the fracture of so many large rocks throughout our land is, perhaps, a question more easily asked than answered. If they were once hot and were fractured in cooling, why did nearly all of them split in a vertical direction and nearly through the centre? In the deepest and wildest forests, where human foot has seldom trod, do we find the same mysterious granite memorials to excite our wonder and surprise. Perhaps nearly every man and woman has heard it suggested in their younger days that these rocks were thus rent when the Lord and Savior of mankind was crucified for the sins of the world, as if to serve as a lasting reproach to the stubborn and hard hearts of the unbelieving Jews, which refused to melt or be moved at his dying agonies. And, whether from early education or from some other influence, we never look upon one of these fractured rocks but we think of the scene on Calvary, and our hearts are filled with a warm and tender glow of devotion and adoration. How much do we need these widely-spread and enduring monuments

of his sufferings and of his love towards us to remind us of our obligations to him and our duties to each other !

But if ever there was "a sermon in a stone," there is one which comes to our ears in mournful tones and with wailing cadence from the old granite boulder known as Split Rock, which stands in what is now the town of Alton, in Laconia, within a few rods of where once stood the house of Captain Britton Waldron. As this rock is intimately connected with the events to be recorded in our narrative, we will now resume the thread of our discourse.

Young Benedict, the son and first born of Waldron and Rozella, had now reached the age of three years, and was the pride of his doting parents, and the very idol of the noble old grandfather, Squire Langdell. In little Benedict all their hopes and affections centred ; and he was the anchor on which all their earthly hopes and prospects depended. He was unusually active and sprightly, and could trot his wooden horse faster and crack his little whip louder than any other boy of his age in the neighborhood. His bright eye and his sweet mouth ever wore a witching smile, which gave a peculiar charm to all his boyish words and phrases ; yet he seemed as thoughtful as he was playful, and frequently asked questions concerning the origin of the sun, moon, and stars, as well as our own little earth, which would have puzzled wiser heads than those of his father and mother to have answered satisfactorily. He loved to chase the butterfly, and to gaze at the wild bee as it drew the sweet juices from the white clover, through his tiny tube, or to see him fold his wings close to his side and cling with unyielding grasp to the slender petals when the high wind rocked and bent the stalk. And often would his joyous laugh ring up from the garden with sweeter melody than the suppressed trumpetings of the bee he so delighted to enclose in the velvet flower bells of the morning glory.

In one of these playful gambols one day his father chanced, in coming from the field, to pass through the garden, and, meeting him, caught him up in his arms, and, with an excess of emotion quite unusual to his wonted sternness, pressed him to his bosom and kissed him again and again. Rozella, who was looking out of the window, at once detected something unnatural in his air and manner as he thus caressed his child, and as he entered the house she saw that he looked pale.

"What goes wrong to-day, dear Britton?" asked she, with an anxious look.

"I can hardly tell;" replied Waldron, "but I am troubled."

"Is it for dear Benedict?" inquired Rozella.

"No," returned the captain; "but for you, my dear Rozella."

"Tell me all at once," said she, as she fell into a chair by his side.

"Do not be frightened," replied Waldron, soothingly, "but keep calm; as my alarm may be needless, if not foolish. But one of the neighbors has just been telling me of a strange man who has been seen hanging about the woods yonder and watching our house very narrowly."

"Mercy!" cried Rozella. "Who can it be?"

"I have my suspicions," replied Waldron.

"How was he dressed?" asked Rozella.

"He wore an old slouched hat," replied Waldron, "a very ragged old Quaker coat, and had a large patch over one eye."

"Mercy! mercy!" cried Rozella, shuddering. "What can we do? But is it not possible that it may be some other than our old enemy?"

"The trees are badly marked in the woods;" returned Waldron, "and I have been to see them."

"And what are these marks?" asked Rozella.

"The letters J. T. are on many trees," rejoined Waldron, "and on some the additional letters R. L., with an *and* between them and the former."

"Sorrow! sorrow!" exclaimed Rozella. "It is enough;" and was falling senseless to the floor, when Waldron caught her in his arms and bore her to the bed.

It was not until evening that Rozella recovered sufficiently to be able to leave her bed; and the captain spent the remainder of the day in the house, and busied himself, after his wife dispensed with his assistance in her own behalf, in making bars for the doors and buttons for the windows. They passed a sleepless night and kept a close watch from the windows, but saw no one, although it was quite evident from the marks on the trees that their old foe must have been around the premises for some time, and had doubtless seen them at evening long before it had been ascertained that he was in the vicinity.

"I almost wish," said Rozella, the next morning, "but then it would be wrong; but I was thinking that, if John Stark had finished Taurus up at St. Francis, we should not now be annoyed with so foul a specimen of total depravity."

"I thought of the same thing myself," responded the captain; "and then it popped into my head that the old owl king was getting a little hungry."

"It will never do even to think of such a thing," replied Rozella.

"No," replied Waldron; "I suppose it will not."

"But," remarked Rozella, "if we see any thing more of him, would it not be well to rally the settlers and search the woods, and, if they found him, drive him off in such a way that he would never dare to appear again within the borders of Laconia?"

"It is a time of peace now," replied Waldron, "and we might be thought cowardly should we even mention our suspicions or our fears. I think we had better say nothing

about the matter, and, if any one mentions it, pretend that we have no fears about it."

Several weeks now passed without any thing more being seen or heard of their dreaded enemy, and Captain Waldron and his wife had almost forgotten their fears.

Little Benedict was allowed to range over the fields as usual, for they had not the least suspicion that any harm was meditated against him; but it happened that one day, while engaged in his boyish sports about the fields, he mounted his wooden horse and galloped out to the Travelers' Rest, as the Split Rock was called, and the demon's eyes were upon him.

"Ha! ha!" cried Taurus to himself, as he lay concealed in the wood. "The lad is a rare diamond, as was his mother before him. She should have been mine, and mine only. Revenge! Ah, I said it was sweet under the very click of Wenane's grating arrow; yet that was music to my ear compared with the grating shaft of scorn and contempt shot from thy mother's eyes and which pierced my very soul. Britton Waldron was it whom she loved? Ha! I see his very image in thy face; but the eyes, — O, they are the mother's, and are the same bright orbs that shot into this heart all the anguish which now rankles there. I it was who first bespoke her, and was manly enough to declare my passion to thy father; and I then told him she was a crown which he would see me win and wear bravely. And did he not deceive me when he bade me not be in haste, for the young lady had been accustomed to refined and fashionable society, and my roughness would frighten her? And did he not say, too, that, if I wished to win the fair Forest Queen, I must proceed cautiously and slowly, when at the same time he himself was planning to get the start of me and secure the prize I so much longed to obtain? What foul deceit was even then under his tongue! and fully and dreadfully will Jack Taurus be revenged on

his deceptive soul. But can I, and he so young and so innocent? Thine eyes, boy, are like the timid fawn's, and thy little mouth as sweet as his when he crops the tender herbage upon the banks of some silvery stream. Thy voice, too, is more musical than the fabled sirens of old, and thy joyous laugh rings out upon the air like the gushing morning song of the swallow in spring or the wild mocking bird that sings upon the tree which o'erhangs the lake, and thine eyes mirror the soul within as the waters do the bird. Ah, I have it now! Thy spirit is thy mother's, and shall live on and live ever; but thy body is that of thy treacherous father, and shall die. Have I said it? Die, did I say? Yes; Taurus's heart has pronounced thy doom, and his hands are not afraid to execute what his lips have uttered. Die! it sounds rather startling. I seem to hear it ring from the rock; yet, as I said, it is only thy father's accursed body, so visible in thee, that shall die. So now to the work. Aha! you are now in my grasp! Cry, do you? Well, this broad hand upon the little mouth stops its plaintive though still sweet music, and would do so were it a thousand times sweeter. Please let me go, do you say? No, boy, never! I am Jack Taurus, whom thy father deceived and thy mother scorned. Offer to give me all your playthings if I'll not harm you, do you? Ha! ha! lad, you are yourself the plaything in the paws of the bear. Your mother shall mend my coat if I will let you go home, did you say? Ah, can she mend my heart, boy? That is the question. No, no; she wanted, if it had not been so rotten, to string it on a tinker's hot soldering iron, and laughed as she said my neck deserved the string most. Die, die, I say, for your mother's scorn and your father's deceit. Gasp and quackle do you, boy? Hush! it is almost over; don't writhe so; your little throat is in the vice of death. Ah, he quivers, and his eyes swell out, but they grow dim. Dead, dead, for thy mother's scorn

and thy father's treachery. Now to the deep and dark crevice in Split Rock. There! he falls heavily; but he groans not nor stirs. Now for the dry leaves and brush to cover up the body; a little dirt first, and then the leaves and brush. There, that is sufficient; spring will never thaw out the dead, and the boy sleeps soundly and securely. Now, Jack, to parts unknown, and nevermore shall thy foot press the soil of the once pleasant but now accursed land of Laconia. Ha! ha! I did it well; and 'tis all over. But I must hasten on still faster, for they may smell the blood. I think I do myself; yes, 'tis on my hand, and came from that sweet mouth. Well, here is water, and it will easily come off. Rub harder, Jack; but still it don't go off. Pshaw! I will wear it as a trophy of my bravery. What! shuddering? Perhaps I'm not so brave as I thought myself. But what ails the flower, there? that, too, looks bloody. It was fresh and smiling this morning when I passed it; but it is now withered and bloody. I'll smell it. O, horror! it smells of blood. And the song of the bird, too, is not so sweet as then. I am sure it is the robin, but his plumage is soiled and bloody and his voice is cracked and husky. Benedict, did he say? O, he knows the name, then! I must run faster, and try to escape from the robin and myself too. But stop! Are those the stars that begin to shine in the evening sky? They look more like clots of gore. I never knew before that stars were ever eclipsed. The moon, too, looks queerly, and seems swimming in a sea of blood. If such are the effects of crime, I would sooner die a thousand deaths than live with such a load of guilt upon my soul. But, then, I'm not so very bad after all, for I have only paid them back the shameful wrong they have done me. True, the innocent boy had done me no wrong; but I only took the life of the boy to expiate the father's crime, and allowed the mother's spirit to live on."

The day at the house of Captain Waldron finally wore away ; and, as Mrs. Waldron had company that afternoon, she hardly missed her darling boy, or, if she did, supposed him to be engaged in his usual rambles.

"Where is little Benedict?" asked the captain, as he came in from the field where he had been at work. "The little rogue did not come to meet me as usual, to give me his kiss of welcome ; and I missed the pattering of his little feet coming through the lane. Where can he be?"

"I am sure I don't know," replied Rozella ; "I supposed he was playing about the premises, and think he cannot be far off."

Both now went to the door, but could see nothing of the child ; and the father then went to the barn and called his name ; but no answer was returned. He then called him in a louder tone, but with a tremor in his full, manly voice ; and still nought but echo replied. He saw that his voice betrayed his anxiety, and was afraid to call a second time.

"What can it mean, Britton?" asked Rozella, anxiously. "He never strayed off so far before."

She then called him herself ; and still there was no answer. They then searched the garden and looked behind the fences, not knowing but he might have laid down and fallen to sleep after his play. Finally his father went out in the vicinity of Split Rock ; and, to his horror, there lay Benedict's little cap upon the ground, with the stick he used for his horse by its side, but no further sign or trace of him. Neither himself nor Rozella entertained the least suspicion that Taurus was in any way connected with the sudden and mysterious disappearance of their darling child, but feared that some monstrous wild beast had caught and devoured him, or that he had been captured and carried away by the Indians.

The settlers were instantly rallied, and runners sent in all directions, while a special messenger was despatched to

Squire Langdell, who shortly rode furiously up, almost frantic with fear and anguish, with his flowing gray locks wet with the night dews, but his heaving and agonized breast still more wet with the hot tears which rolled from his furrowed cheeks upon it. Gridley and Plump, too, were speedily on the ground ; and even blind Sarah, when she heard the news, was frantic to be allowed to go, as she was sure, she said, that she could find the bird by the sweet chirp of his musical note. Old Mrs. Emond now bent lower than ever as she leaned upon her trembling staff, called for the blessing of Heaven to rest upon the tender lamb, and prayed that he might soon be restored to the arms of his parents. The woods, and fields, and streams, in the vicinity were searched that night a hundred times ; and the next day the search was resumed and kept up for many successive days, but all to no purpose. Split Rock alone held the secret, and, like the sea, was not yet ready to give up its dead. Rozella, pale and desponding, had taken to her bed, and her cheek grew hectic and her eye wild. There was no Elsie to comfort her in turn in her bitter anguish, for she had fallen long before.

“ O,” murmured she, “ were I sure that my little blossom had faded from earth and was at rest, I would try to be resigned ; but who knows what frightful pangs may be wrenching his tender heart ? When I drowse I seem to hear his gentle voice lisping his mother’s name. O, how I blame myself for allowing the precious lamb to leave my bosom ! Would that I could have died for him, that this aching heart might be at peace ! ”

As thus she bewailed her sore affliction she thought of what Mrs. Emond had said of the loss of Lily Ransom hastening her mother’s death ; and seriously did she reflect upon the probability of her own exodus from her earthly tabernacle. As she began to relax her hold upon the world, she naturally, in a measure at least, ceased to be agitated

by earthly things ; and, as her feverish excitement and anguish abated, her health improved.

The grief of Captain Waldron had been as poignant as her own ; but, as his health was firm and his constitution sound, he did not, like her, sink under the mountain load that pressed upon his manly heart. When he saw her fading cheek and drooping form he took the alarm and taxed his energies to the utmost to comfort and console her ; and glad was his heart when he saw the crisis of her affliction had been passed and her health slowly but hopefully returning.

Squire Langdell had felt the sorrow that blighted their hopes and darkened their prospects but little less than did Waldron and Rozella. He felt as though the staff upon which he had hoped to lean for solace and comfort in tottering down the declining slope of years had been taken away when he seemed to stand most in need of it.

Years rolled on, and still no tidings came of the lost one ; and all save those to whose hearts he was near and dear had nearly ceased to remember that such an occurrence had ever happened within the borders of Laconia.

CHAPTER XLII.

CONFESSION AND DEATH OF TAURUS.—HIS LETTER.—SICKNESS OF ROZELLA.—HER RESTORATION.—STATE OF LACONIA.—WALDRON AND ROZELLA VISIT THE GRAVES OF THEIR DEAR DEPARTED ONES, AND THEIR REMARKS THERE.

“MURDER will out” is an old and time-honored proverb, the truth of which is very generally, if not universally, believed. But whoever will take pains to watch the columns of a city newspaper for a single year, or for a series of years, and enumerate the number of persons who meet their death by violence in some shape or other, the authors of which are never detected, can hardly fail to arrive at the conclusion that not more than one murder in ten is fully brought to light, and will not be until it stands revealed in the burning blaze of the great day of judgment.

But it so happened in the case before us that, years after the tragic scene enacted at Split Rock, a man in a distant state was lying upon his death bed, and, being assured that the sands of his earthly existence were fast running out, began, as he had no time to repair, to review the evil deeds of which he had been the agent. As his many crimes not only rose but rushed like a long pent-up and raging flood upon his mind, his soul sickened at the awful pages his memory laid open in the book of his life ; for they seemed written in characters of blood. He covered

down upon his bed, and, covering his eyes with the blanket, exclaimed,—

“Shut him out! He looks so innocent I can’t do it. Sweet mouth, has he? O, I wish it were a cruel Indian’s, for then I could bear it. O, the very mildness of those eyes is what harrows up my soul. What’s that he says? ‘Save me, sir, and I will give you all my playthings. Please let me go home, and mother shall mend your coat.’ Ah, I thought it was my rent soul which she could not mend. But at that time it was whole and dressed in a holiday suit compared to the bloodstained garb in which it is now arrayed. Horror! horror! Take him away! He gasps and quackles! Blood! blood! My heart is all on fire, and I cannot die! Look down into that Split Rock; do you see those snakes? O, how they hiss and run out their fiery, forked tongues! and how strongly they smell of blood! No; they are demons! See how they dash up the sides of the rock, and, lashing their sides with their quivering tails, fall back again! Horror! they bite and sting me!”

As he thus cried out in a piercing voice, the wretched man bounded from the bed, but was caught by the assistant and again placed upon the bed.

“Ah,” said he, “I am calmer now. Is there any one here who can write?”

“I can write,” replied the man who was watching by his bedside.

“Will you write what I shall dictate,” asked the dying man, “and forward it as soon as I am dead?”

“Certainly,” replied the assistant, and, seating himself, while the other dictated wrote as follows:—

MRS. BRITTON WALDRON: I am the murderer of your innocent child Benedict. Words cannot describe the mingled rage and anguish of my heart when I knew that

you were married to one who had deceived me and obtained her whom I loved a thousand times better than my own life. After I had been absent for years my passion was still unabated, and I returned to Laconia and hung about your house for weeks, merely to get a sight at you ; but when I did so it only increased my frenzy, and I was determined that blood, and blood alone, should satisfy my raging passion. Accordingly, I strangled your darling boy, maddened by his resemblance to his perfidious father, and hid his lifeless remains in the deep cleft of Split Rock, where they probably now are. Can a wretch like me be forgiven ?

JACK TAURUS.

The letter was sealed and directed ; which being done, Taurus exclaimed, —

“So much have I done ; but it amounts to but little save to relieve my own tortures. Does it repair the injury or heal the broken heart of the best and kindest of mothers ? and does it really cleanse the blood from my own soul ? Alas ! no. I feel the keen pangs yet ; they sting to the very core of my heart sharper than a two-edged sword. Aha ! I just think now ; I wonder I did not think of it before. It is just as old Dolly Plot foretold ; for she said, when telling my fortune, that I should die far away from home, among strangers, with blood upon my soul, and a dagger, planted by my own hands, in my heart ; and it is even so. Well, she had a right to foretell it ; for, while she plotted the destruction of others and made me a tool to execute her bloody purposes, she at the same time plotted my own overthrow, and I was too blind to see her infernal design. O, how many souls, and bodies too, have been made to bleed by the hellish plots of one vile woman ! She comes—she comes ! O, keep her from me ! Save me—save me ! There ! see her high cap as she trundles towards me ! and see the flames roll out of her mouth !

She is the blackest fiend in the whole troop of them. O! O! mercy! mercy! I die!"

After Taurus's death the letter was sent to Mrs. Waldron ; and, as soon as it was received, a search was made in the cleft of Split Rock, and the mouldering bones of the innocent Benedict brought to light.

The creeping morning glory that had climbed the house-side in the breeze of morning, and intertwined itself about the parent stem until it gave abundant promise that it would be the solace and comfort of those who had reared its tender shoot and watched its budding beauty, was ruthlessly torn from the spot it so much graced by the rude hand of one who had no love for flowers, and flung, like a weed, away to wither and decay ; but the great Gardener, who is mindful of the lily of the garden as well as the lily of the valley, held up the parent vine until its lacerated back had joined again ; and the bowed head was just raising itself to the companionship of its fellows when another missile, hurled from the same hand, tore open the wound afresh and almost laid it prostrate in the dust.

The bones of little Benedict were taken from Split Rock all mouldy and crumbling ; but Rozella, his loving and heart-broken mother, felt that she could not suffer them to be buried without seeing them ; and, although the neighbors had advised her to forego the sight, she still adhered to her determination ; but, when she saw them, her former feelings of sorrow and anguish revived in full and fearful force. " O, was it through my negligence," moaned she, " that you fell into the deadly coils of the serpent?"

So saying, she fell into strong convulsions, and for a long time lay helpless and exhausted. After she had revived somewhat, Waldron tenderly asked, " Dear Rozella, what shall we do for you?"

" Be calm," replied Rozella. " I must soon go beyond the reach of human sympathy and forever be at rest ;

and, ere I go, I would like to see old Mrs. Emond, though I fear she is too blind and decrepit to be moved hither."

"I do not know, dear Rozella," replied Waldron. "She is indeed very aged and infirm ; but I will see what can be done."

And Captain Waldron, the heroic soldier who had so bravely led on the fiery Mountain Rangers to glorious victory at the very cannon's mouth, never looked so really and truly noble as when at the head of his oxen and cart, within which last he had placed an easy chair, he started off with tears in his eyes for old Mrs. Emond. Scout the idea as you will, O hale and stouthearted man of the world, there is a latent yet mighty power she wields that you know not of. There are those who would rather have an old Mrs. Emond's prayers to turn the bolt of justice in the safety lock of Heaven and open its pearly gates to a trembling soul than all the gold of earth, made into one solid key and borne thither upon the shoulders of all the greatest warriors of earth, to buy admittance or force an entrance there.

Waldron soon returned with Mrs. Emond, who was all bent down and blind with age, for she was obliged to be led wherever she wished to go ; but, though blind, she still saw with the eye of faith, and, though lame, she walked by the same supporting power ; and though her cracked and piping voice came indistinctly through her sunken lips, yet Heaven bent low its ear of mercy to catch her lisping prayer. Being led to Rozella's bedside, she placed her withered hand upon her fevered brow, and, raising her dim and filmy eyes to heaven, exclaimed, "Father, be merciful to the child, for she hath shown mercy to others. Rozella, receive my blessing. Heaven is kind, and you must live."

"Ah, dear mother in Israel," replied Rozella, "I feel the pleasing thrill of your hand through every fibre of my exhausted frame, and my troubled spirit is at rest. I see

it all now. His afflictions are sweeter than the balmy breezes from beds of mountain daisies ; and even his chastenings refresh my soul. His rod but beats the dust from the veil of my spirit ; so I now see ; and his hand has but unchained my chariot wheels and sped me on my way. Lord, do with me as seemeth good to thee, and thy servant will nevermore murmur nor repine."

"Child," cried Mrs. Emond, "thou art healed."

And Rozella from that hour arose and took charge of her house, of which she made Mrs. Emond the chief ornament, and entreated the good old lady to consider it as her home for the remainder of her days. But she was so much attached to her own rustic abode that she did not feel at liberty to accept Rozella's generous offer, but chose rather to die where she had so long lived — in her own humble cottage ; and one day, not long afterwards, the neighbors, on calling at her house, found her sitting in her high-backed chair with her hands clasped together, and her eyes raised to heaven as though they were gazing after her spirit ; for the angels had come on balmy wings of love and wafted it home.

From the time of that terrible and bloody scourge — the Indian and French war — Laconia had gone on most prosperously. The lines of the towns had been run, and the old homestead of Squire Langdell fell within the town of Rochester. The good squire was among the first and best settlers, and had ever been a shining example to the rising generation. The whole state was in a flourishing condition ; and, as usual in all old-settled countries, the younger portion of the inhabitants now began to emigrate, and the brave old Green Mountain State was fast peopled by her hardy sons, as they, even in those early days, began to push the rod of empire farther west. While the wars were carried on by the English against the French and Indians,

it was necessary that numerous bodies of troops should pass and repass through the green and fertile country now known and honored as the State of Vermont. The soldiers, who had not only an eye on the enemy, but on the land also through which they marched, had noticed the richness and fertility of its soil ; and, when hostilities had ceased, a swarm of adventurers settled upon these productive lands for the sake of the bounty ; for the governors of New Hampshire and New York as eagerly granted the lands to the settlers as they obtained their grants. But the governors also, who eagerly extended their jurisdictions as far as possible, interfered with each other's claims, and a serious quarrel would have been the consequence but for the revolutionary spirit towards England, which now began to manifest itself, and which diverted the attention of the settlers from the difficulties at home. Many of the brave heroes of Laconia joined in the revolution and fought with patriotic valor, gaining rich crowns of honor by giving up a crown and throne of blood. Grizzly Gridley and the heroic Georgietta lived happily together to an advanced age, and reared a numerous family to assist in peopling the adjoining states as well as Laconia. Gridley was considered one of the first men in his township, was often at the head of town affairs, and acquitted himself creditably in whatever business he undertook ; while his wife graced whatever circle she honored with her presence.

Squire Matthew Langdell and his wife lived only to see the commencement of the revolution ; and, although he always seemed attached to the cause and crown of his dear old king, no man was a better or truer friend and citizen or a greater honor to the good land of Laconia. He chose his burial-place by the side of a little babbling brook not far from his old residence, where the rising mound yet

attracts the notice of the passer by, as it reminds him that here are "the old folks at home."

Comical Plump and the brighteyed Owega were among the happiest of the happy ; and at the close of the revolution the old owl king did indeed abdicate the throne of blood ; for Plump, at heart, always abhorred the business of human butchery, and, as in the St. Francis expedition, always declared that his taking up arms and the slaying of the Hingins the old owl king ate for his breakfast was only the natural result of "the force of circumstances." He spent a part of his life in Laconia ; but after the revolution declared, as also did Owega, that the country was getting old and dull ; and, as they liked best the spirit-stirring life of the woods, they finally emigrated to the west. There both spent the greater part of their time in hunting and fishing ; and the gun of no hunter could bring down the bounding deer at a greater distance than the old owl king of Comical Plump, and he finally preached and practised in the same direction.

Poor blind Sarah died at an early age ; but, after the death of old Mrs. Emond, she seemed quite lonely and disconsolate, and hailed with joy the grim archer whose fatal shaft summoned her to rejoin her dear and venerable friend.

The little Dutchman of the Buck's Horn Inn and his plump vrow were still a hale and hearty old couple, and kept the sign in front of the little red inn still swinging and screeching, as a welcome, though not very agreeable, sound to the ears of those who believed in ghosts that here was to be found entertainment for man and beast.

Ensign Wiley Walcott came out of his fiery trial purified by the process. He subsequently married Miss Agnes Tufton, sister of the pure but unfortunate Elsie, and lived with her father, an honor to all with whom he associated.

Marine Lee and his wife always resided in Laconia, and, at his death, was heard to wish "that he might soon sail out of the stormy sea with all his sails spread and colors flying for a haven of rest which would afford good anchorage for a weary tar."

"Our old friends," said Rozella to Waldron one morning, "are nearly all gone before us. We have been spared to see nearly all of them depart, and their graves are thick around us."

"Yes," replied the captain, with a deep sigh; "Death shows no respect to persons in the end, although he seems often to take the best and loveliest first; and our new soil is already the receptacle of many a bosom which beat high with glowing hopes and fervent wishes for the prosperity of our dear land."

"I have been thinking," said Rozella, "that I should like to visit the graves of those who have lived and died our friends. It is a sort of melancholy pleasure thus to roam among the sleeping dust of those we have loved; and, though it saddens, it also softens the feelings and makes the heart purer and better."

"It is somewhat solemn," replied Waldron; "but, if you wish it, we will go. There is a sadness even in visiting places where our friends have lived; yet I like to visit such spots, even though the old familiar faces are no more there to give us a smiling welcome; though the grief we feel at the contrast is almost too severe to be fully compensated by the recollection of past joys. We will go, if you like, to-day."

They started on their mournful mission immediately after dinner; and, as they were obliged to visit several towns in the vicinity, Waldron asked Rozella where she would like to go first.

"To the grave," answered she, "of that truest and best Indian friend (excepting always Owega) I ever had — Wenane."

"Well," replied the captain, "as you have not been there for a long time, we will go there first."

As they rode along, Rozella remarked that she ought to have visited Wenane's grave before now; for, although she had been there many times since he died, it seemed a long time since she was last there. She also added that it was the earnest wish of Chocorua that she should visit it often and ever hold his son in remembrance, as he was her fast friend.

"There," said Rozella, as they drove up to the spot, "is the same little rosebush I planted many years ago; and it lives and flourishes yet. O, he was a true Indian and a true friend."

"He was so," replied Waldron; "and I have always regretted the death of his brave old father. True, he had the passionate temper and revengeful disposition of a savage, and his burning the house of poor Grovenor, with his wife and little ones, was a most inhuman and barbarous act; still the taking of his life did not pay the debt. It never repairs the injury to take one life to pay for another."

"So I told them at the time," replied Rozella; "but my good father did not aid in taking the old chief's life, for which I am very thankful."

"We have so far to go," remarked Waldron, "that our stops must be quite short."

They next visited the grave of Mrs. Emond; and here their feelings got the mastery of them, and both wept profusely over the lonely mound without a stone to tell whose peaceful dust slept within. But a halo of glory seemed to rest upon it; and Rozella remarked that doubtless the same blessing she in her lifetime had so freely given to others now rested upon herself. She added that she could seem to feel the hallowed influence which lingered about the spot as plainly as she could see the light that came trembling through the air above her head.

The grave of Marine Lee was next visited ; and serious and solemn were their reflections as they gazed upon the resting-place of the noble-hearted sailor.

They paused for a moment at the grave of blind Sarah, who now, however, could see eye to eye and know as she was known, and then hastened to another and dearer spot — the grave of her good old father and mother, upon the hillside, near the little brook. The winds came moaning down the mountain slope, the tall grass lashed the verdant mound, and the brook babbled noisily by its side.

"It is a solemn place," remarked Waldron, "although a pleasant one."

"Ah, yes," replied Rozella ; "the little brook babbles mournfully as it runs away to tell the plaintive tale."

As they gazed in silence at the stream the wild brier bowed to kiss its rippling bosom, and rose with a pearly teardrop glittering upon its thorny lashes. But the old squire slept on, for his grave seemed to suit him.

"Ah," said Waldron, "he was a good man."

"Yes," replied Rozella, "and the grave was only the receiving hall into which he has stepped to throw off his earthly garments for a heavenly robe. Or it may be likened to the cocoon, into which the larva, or grub, has retired to pass through the chrysalis state to that of the butterfly ; and when his white wings are plumed he will emerge and soar away into the realms of infinite space until he reaches the everlasting gardens of paradise.

"Ah," continued she, "how many of our dear dead lie around us ! And never in so brief a space has the sharp sickle of Death reaped so ripe and rich a harvest, nor the grim angel garnered a fairer field, as in this our long-loved and lovely Laconia."

